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NATIONAL LANGUAGE for INDIA

Compiled by

Z. A. AHMAD

G. D. NAIDU,

U. M. S., COIMBATORE.

Kitabistan Series

NATIONAL LANGUAGE
FOR INDIA

[A SYMPOSIUM]

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Z. A. AHMAD, B.Sc., Ph.D. (LONDON)

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KITABISTAN
ALLAHABAD

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G. D. NAIDU,
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G. D. NAIDU,
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PREFACE

The problem of national language has been, of late, the subject of an acute controversy.

There is no difference of opinion on the question whether or not India should have a national language. For, all sensible persons are agreed that we have to forge a medium of thought and expression which can cement our common efforts and urges for the rehabilitation and development of our national life. Nor is there any dispute over the fact that of all the Indian languages that which is commonly spoken in the towns and villages of the greater part of the North, and which is variously described as Hindi, Urdu or Hindustani, is best suited to act as the national language. Differences, however, arise when we begin to consider the question as to how and in what direction this language of the North is to be developed in order to suit national purposes. To put it plainly, the point at issue is whether the national language is to be re-orientated more in the direction of Sanskrit, purging itself of all foreign words, particularly those of Arabic and Persian, or whether it is to retain a substantial element of words of non-Indian origin. Divergent opinions on this problem have now, unfortunately, crystallised into what is called the Hindi-Urdu controversy.

The votaries of Hindi argue that the problem does not concern northern India alone, but the whole of the country, and since most of the Indian languages are derived from Sanskrit, the national language will not be acceptable to the great majority of people unless it is fairly well-loaded with words and expressions of Sanskritic origin. Besides, they hold, that the best literary and cultural traditions of the country can only be expressed through a language which is replete with indigenous words and connects the present with the ancient past. The supporters of Urdu, on the other hand, maintain that the cultural transformation that has taken place in India on account of the impact with Muslim influences cannot possibly be ignored. It is, therefore, highly undesirable from a national point of view to foist on the country a language which seeks to re-create the cultural atmosphere of the ancient Hindu civilization. For, this would lead to internecine conflict, and a sharp accentuation of religious and communal differences. Urdu, according to them, is a language which represents a unique synthesis of that culture which, during the last six or seven centuries, has grown out of the common hopes, achievements, struggles, joys and sorrows of the Hindus and Muslims of this land. It is basically an Indian language, but the free mingling of Arabic and Persian words with it, makes it as capable of expressing the social and cultural traditions of the Indian Muslims as that of the Hindus. To supplant it now with a Sanskritised Hindi would be

to wipe out the history of the Indian people for several centuries past.

Whatever weight one may attach to the arguments and counter-arguments of these two schools of thought, one should not ignore the fact that the outlook of both is dominated by various other influences not directly related to the question of language. Of these, the most important on the side of the supporters of Sanskritised Hindi is the revivalist urge which has permeated the educated and politically conscious upper and middle strata of Hindu society. On the side of the supporters of Urdu the major factor is the inordinate and almost irrational suspicion entertained by a large section of the Muslims against the majority community, and which finds expression in separatist tendencies as much in the field of culture as in politics. For several years past, a number of literary men and politicians have been advocating a compromise between Sanskritised Hindi and Persianised Urdu in the form of a language called Hindustani, which is to include the largest measure possible of those words and expressions that have either already found popular currency, or are capable of being commonly accepted with ease. Hindustani, it is held, will not eschew any word whatever merely on account of its peculiar origin. It will grow on the basis of the common grammar of Hindi and Urdu and the large stock of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian words which have become an inseparable part of our every-day speech. Hindustani will, thus, be a

truly national medium, and it will so pool and develop the various strains in our cultural life as to make them all mutually complimentary.

The ultimate solution of the language problem may perhaps come about on the lines suggested by the supporters of Hindustani. The difficulty at present, however, is that Hindustani still represents only a tendency in literature. Unless this tendency is rapidly and vigorously concretised, it would not be an easy matter to stop the pull of literary Hindi in one direction and that of literary Urdu in the other. Besides, when we come to actual writing, we find a good deal of difference even among the supporters of Hindustani. This obviously is due to the fact that the conception of Hindustani has not yet taken a definite literary form. If we look at the problem more fundamentally we would find that much of the present-day controversy is futile and meaningless. For, after all languages are not made to order by a few writers and literary enthusiasts, but are the products of social organisation. As such, the form and content of our national language shall depend largely on the course that social development will take in India. And yet, as all social change must work itself out through human agency, we cannot ignore the views and opinions of those who can for the time being influence the minds of the people in one direction or another. Because, the sympathies and antipathies fostered by them leave a fairly lasting stamp on the course of events. It is from this point of view that an attempt has

been made to bring together in this symposium the opinions of various contemporary writers and scholars on the problem of national language.

Due care has been taken to include all the important schools of thought in the symposium. The orthodox pro-Urdu School is represented here by Maulvi Abdul Haq and Mian Bashir Ahmad, who are of the opinion that with certain minor reforms, Urdu can easily become the common language of the country, and will as such command popular acceptance everywhere. Maulvi Abdul Haq maintains that until 1857 Urdu was universally accepted as the most widely spoken common language of the Hindus and the Muslims, and no one ever protested when in 1837 it was made the court language. After the Mutiny, however, a new consciousness of Hindu nationalism was born, and this created a number of revivalist movements, which sought to resuscitate Vedic knowledge and learning and to re-establish the dominance of ancient Hindu culture. This revivalism was supported by the Theosophists, and certain aspects of it were encouraged by government officials. Thus a campaign for Sanskritising the language was started, and regular organisations were set up in Bihar and the United Provinces for propagating a highly Sanskritised speech called Hindi. Sir Syed Ahmed and a few other supporters of Urdu opposed this separatist move on the part of a section of the Hindus, but to no avail. Hindi language and literature continued to develop in opposition to Urdu under the patron-

age of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and several other leaders of the Hindu community. Maulvi Abdul Haq goes on to say that the deliberate importation of unfamiliar and difficult Sanskrit words into the language by Hindi writers has created such a big gulf between Hindi and Urdu and has given rise to so many prejudices on both sides that any rational solution of the language problem seems to be extremely difficult today. He is strongly of the opinion that Urdu is not a language of the Muslims alone. According to him the Hindus have in the past played a more important part in its development and growth. But today, under the influence of revivalist tendencies, most of the Hindus have cut themselves away from it, leaving it in the hands of those who are inclined to overload it with Arabic and Persian elements. Maulvi Abdul Haq considers that Mahatma Gandhi by throwing the full weight of his influence in support of Hindi has increased the fears and suspicions of the supporters of Urdu, who are beginning to realise that it is the deliberate policy of many of the nationalist leaders to foist on the country a highly Sanskritised language. He thinks that the so-called Hindustani of which so much is heard in political circles, is useful only for conversational purposes and not for literary works. Deploring the present conflict between Hindi and Urdu, he puts forward a practical suggestion for the solution of the problem. To quote his own words "A common dictionary may be compiled which would contain all the Persian,

Arabic and Urdu words which have passed into Hindi speech and literature, and all the Sanskrit and Hindi words which Urdu has adopted. This dictionary may be placed before a representative body of Hindi and Urdu writers after whose approval it may be published as a basis for the further development of a common language. And this body or a committee nominated by it may be made responsible for adding to it from time to time such Hindi and Urdu words and expressions as are deemed necessary for the growth of the language and for introducing new ideas. Suitable publicity may be given to the results of these efforts.....It is possible that in this manner we may succeed in creating a group of writers determined to popularise a common language through the driving force of their literary effort.....It might at least help to mitigate the ever-increasing divergence between the two languages. The publication of a few newspapers and periodicals in this common language may go a long way towards popularising it."

Mian Bashir Ahmad's analysis is similar to that of Maulvi Abdul Haq. He shows how historically Urdu represents a unique synthesis of Hindu and Muslim cultures in India. As he observes "It is clear that Urdu has ultimately a Sanskrit and therefore a Hindu foundation, with a superstructure which is partly Muslim, and therefore it represents a just compromise between the two cultures." He deplores the attitude of Mahatma Gandhi and many other Congressmen who

have identified themselves with the pro-Hindi movement. He suggests that Hindi writers should "give up their short-sighted policy of boycott of Arabic and Persian words and use more commonly understood words and phrases." If this is done, Hindi would come nearer to Urdu and the two shall eventually reach a meeting point.

The orthodox pro-Hindi School is represented in this symposium by Dr. Dhirendra Varma. Dr. Dhirendra Varma considers Urdu as a dialect of Hindi which is overloaded with Persian and Arabic words, and which draws its cultural inspiration from Iran, Central Asia and Arabia. Urdu assumed a certain importance in the past owing to political reasons. It was the most convenient medium for those Hindus who lived in the Hindi-speaking areas and were converted to Islam. Besides, owing to the exigencies of administration it was learnt by government officials and others who were connected with the state machinery of the time. But under the Moghal rule Urdu or *Khariboli* was always regarded as a foreign language by the Hindus in general. During the nineteenth century, however, the *Khariboli*, after being shorn of its foreign vocabulary and script, was developed into modern Hindi. Urdu has now lost the state patronage which it enjoyed in the past; hence its prospects are not so bright today. With the change of rulers, all justification for the retention of Urdu for administrative work has disappeared. In fact in this respect, anglicized Hindi and the Roman script

has at present a stronger case than Urdu. Hindi, according to Dr. Varma is the only language which would enable us to remain in close touch, on the one hand, with the ancient cultures of India as preserved in Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit, and on the other, with almost all the existing Indian languages and literatures such as Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Uriya, Assamese and even those of the South. Dr. Varma strongly disparages the attempts to bolster up Hindustani. For he considers Hindustani to be nothing but an easy variety of Urdu, which is not at all suitable for high literary or scientific works. He is afraid that in search of a common language the supporters of Hindustani would allow neither Hindi nor Urdu to develop. According to him the real solution of the problem of language lies "in the awakening of the right type of nationalism amongst the Hindi-speaking people which should rally them round their national language, Hindi, irrespective of religion, caste or class differences."

The rest of the contributors to this symposium, with the exception of Prof. Amaranatha Jha represent various shades of the Hindustani school. Prof. Amaranatha Jha is definitely against Urdu being accepted as the national language; for he is convinced that the entire atmosphere and genius of Urdu are foreign and not Indian. But, according to him, the claims of present-day Hindi are equally untenable. For, "during recent years the tendency of the Hindi writers has been to make their language artificial, stilted and pedantic. They

are bringing in unfamiliar, difficult and intractable Sanskrit words. They are abandoning the plain style of the early Hindi poets and songsters. They are taking the language way from the masses from whence it grew." And yet he is sure, "that if any language of Indian origin has any chance of becoming the common language of the whole country, it must be one which is predominantly Sanskritic." Prof. Jha is, however, strongly inclined to retain English for inter-provincial purposes. As he observes, "Indians have for about a century acquired a valuable knowledge of this language and the leaders can use it with ease. It cannot be the language of the masses, but for the Central Legislature and Federal Court and other inter-provincial gatherings it can continue as it so long has continued to be a convenient medium of expression."

We may now review briefly the various standpoints of the pro-Hindustani writers.

Mahatma Gandhi's views on the question of language have given rise to numerous misgivings. He has been bitterly attacked by the votaries of Urdu as a supporter and propagator of Sanskritised Hindi. That he has been often misrepresented there is not the slightest doubt. But, it cannot be denied that the suspicious attitude of the orthodox supporters of Urdu in regard to his views found some justification in the fact that while formally supporting the pro-Hindustani stand of the Congress, he identified himself closely with the pro-Hindi movement in the country.

His presidentship of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan at Nagpur in 1935, when he approved of Hindi-Athwa-Hindustani as a suitable name for the national language raised a storm of protest, led by Maulvi Abdul Haq and many other prominent writers of Urdu. Mahatma Gandhi has during the last three or four years written a good deal on the language question, and though his writings at times tend to be self-contradictory, yet it seems that lately he has given serious thought to the matter and has now formulated his views as precisely as possible. He advocates Hindustani and not Hindi as the name of the common language. As regards the language itself, he suggests, firstly, that it should not have any peculiar association with the religious traditions of any community; secondly, that the test of "foreign" and "indigenous" should not be applied to any word, but only the test of currency; thirdly, that all Hindi words used by Urdu writers and all Urdu words used by Hindi writers should be deemed current; fourthly, that in the choice of technical terms no special preference should be given to Sanskrit words and lastly that the Devanagari and the Arabic scripts should both be considered current and official.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru considers Hindi and Urdu as two main aspects of the Hindustani language. For, "they have the same basis, the same grammar, the same fund of ordinary words to draw upon." He does not view with alarm the tendency for Hindi and Urdu in the Hindustani-speaking area to diverge and develop separately, since the

development of either would enrich our language. An adjustment would come about, in time, with the growth of national consciousness and the expansion of mass education. According to Pandit Nehru it is necessary to evolve a *Basic Hindustani* on the lines of *Basic English*, which should be a simple language with only about a thousand words and very little grammar. This Basic Hindustani should serve as an adequate medium for ordinary speech and writing. Apart from it, exhaustive lists of scientific, technical, political and commercial words to be used in Hindustani should be prepared and popularised. Both the Devanagari and the Urdu scripts should be officially recognised. Full opportunity should be given to local languages and dialects to flourish alongside the development of a national language, and education from the primary to the university stage should be given in the language of the province. The national language should be taught in the non-Hindustani speaking areas, only in the secondary stage. In the universities Hindustani and a foreign language should be compulsory subjects. Pandit Nehru believes that even at present the gulf between Urdu and Hindi can be very much narrowed down if the writers avoid courtly and affected style and begin to write for the masses in simple language and deal with the problems affecting the masses.

Babu Rajendra Prasad thinks that the only way of developing Hindustani as the national language and of settling the Hindi-Urdu contro-

versy is to deliberately include in our speech and writing all those Persian and Arabic words which are used by good Hindi writers and all those Hindi words which are used by good Urdu writers. Urdu and Hindi do not differ from each in respect of grammar, but only in respect of vocabulary. Therefore, "if the words used by both become universally accepted and enter into common parlance, not only will the total stock of words be enriched, but it will also be possible to give expression to finer and more delicate shades of meaning." To this end, he suggests the preparation of a standard dictionary which should give the meanings of all Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic words which are being commonly used by Hindi and Urdu writers. Babu Rajendra Prasad is of the opinion that if Hindustani is to develop as a real national language, it shall have to draw its nourishment primarily from the every-day language spoken in the homes of the common people.

Babu Purushottamdas Tandon believes that in the interest of India's freedom movement, it is necessary to exclude English from our national and inter-provincial work. He wants India's real self to assert itself, particularly through that language which is understood by about 25 crores of Indians and which is variously called Hindi, Urdu or Hindustani. Hindi appeals to him as the most suitable name for the national language, because "its associations are old and pleasing and it stands for a synthesis of Hindu and Muslim cultures." Besides, the word Hindi has behind it great tradi-

tions, born of the literary achievements not only of the Hindus, but also of well known Muslim writers, such as Khusro, Kabir, Malik Muhammad Jaisi, Rahim Khan Khankhana, Anis, Raskhan and many others. As regards the form and script of the national language, Babu Purushottamdas Tandon suggests the principle, "Use the language and the script which is intelligible to the people whom you are addressing." He, however, thinks that the Nagari script is not only intrinsically superior to the Urdu script, but is also far more extensively used by the Indian languages. In fact, as he observes, "the Nagari script is understood by a much larger number of the people of India than any other script." Hence it would be advisable to make it the national script. The Urdu script which has a special importance for the Muslims of the Northern India, should be retained and recognised in the North alongside the Nagari script. Babu Purushottamdas pleads for a rational approach to the language problem. He is optimistic about the future and visualises "a complete synthesis not only of Hindi and Urdu questions but also of Hindu and Muslim cultures."

Dr. Zakir Husain defines Hindustani as that language which is in common use in Northern India and is spoken by millions of Hindus and Muslims alike. It is understood equally well by the Hindi-speaking as well as by the Urdu-speaking population. It contains any number of Arabic, Persian and even Turkish, Portuguese and English words, all of which it has thoroughly assimi-

lated and made its own. Urdu and Hindi have been set against each other on account of a craze for the purification of language. Thus, "it was only when people began to forswear the use of Arabic and Persian words and coined Sanskrit equivalents that the common language was rent in twain, some writing pure Hindi, others loading their expression with incongruous Arabic and Persian expressions." Dr. Zakir Husain considers Hindi writers more to blame, in this respect, than Urdu writers. For, "those who speak Urdu, cannot, even in spite, exceed certain bounds. They cannot in a quarrel that has just started the other day, destroy the work of centuries. The framework of their language is Hindustani, its grammar is Hindustani, and they have never affected to loathe words because they were outlandish or infidel. Still, in retaliation or perhaps with some other motive they try to make their language a mosaic of ill-assorted Arabic and Persian words." He characterises the attempts to exclude Persian and Arabic words from Hindustani as sheer lunacy for it amounts to looking at things created by centuries of cooperation between the Hindus and the Muslims as impure and worth discarding. He holds that in the selection of words for our common language derivation should not matter at all. Dr. Zakir Husain further suggests that for the new stock of words which are needed in order to develop Hindustani, we should, in the first place, draw liberally upon village languages and dialects; then, we should consider the terms our crafts-

men and workers have invented; and, lastly, we should take into account the foreign names and terms which our language can easily assimilate. Given the collaboration of Hindi and Urdu writers in the selection of the new vocabulary there is no reason why we should not be able to evolve a common language in the near future.

Kaka Kalelkar thinks that perhaps ultimately the problem of the national language shall be solved by those whose mother tongue is neither Hindi nor Urdu. He stresses the importance of the links that connect language with the religion, culture and politics of a people. Urdu, according to him, is considered by the generality of Indian Muslims as the vehicle of Islamic culture. Sanskrit, on the other hand, is the religious language of the Hindus and being the mother of all the languages of Hindustan is "the symbol *par excellence* of the unity of India." Urdu, by receding further and further away from Sanskrit, has isolated itself from all the other Indian languages. This is unfortunate from the viewpoint of the evolution of a common language. Hindustani can be born only as a result of the union of Hindi and Urdu, and in the beginning easy Hindi and easy Urdu shall be called Hindustani. In time, however, with the spread of education and the development of national culture, a large number of words and expressions from classical languages, such as Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian will flow into Hindustani, make it richer and more expressive. The national language that will thus come into existence will

not be the artificial language of the Pandits and the Maulvis, but will be a real medium for expressing the thoughts, desires and aspirations of the common people. As such, it will borrow whatever it needs from other languages and shall discard whatever is unnecessary. Naturally enough it will have a larger element of those words which are capable of being easily understood and used extensively throughout the country.

Maulana Sulaiman Nadvi is of the opinion that neither the present-day Sanskritised Hindi nor that Urdu which is overflowing with difficult Persian and Arabic words can possibly become the national language. He pleads for the simplification of both Hindi and Urdu . His conception of Hindustani is that of simple Urdu with a fair admixture of those Sanskrit words which are being popularly used.

Babu Sampurnanand holds that the language current among the intelligentsia of Northern India is pre-eminently suited to act as the national language. He does not think that Urdu and Hindi are two separate languages, for their verbs, pronouns, prepositions and conjunctions are the same. They are only two forms of one and the same language. Urdu is however not a suitable name for the national language, Hindi or Hindustani—the language of Hind or Hindustani—are more appropriate and significant terms. As regards the form of the national language, Babu Sampurnanand is definitely of the opinion that when Hindustani develops further it is bound to absorb

a larger element of Sanskrit. The purely Urdu form of writing fails to make an appeal to the people at large, for it is full of themes, similes, metaphors etc. which are drawn from non-Indian sources. As he says, "I am convinced that in a country like ours, where Hindus preponderate and the number of those speaking languages derived from Sanskrit or containing a large number of Sanskrit words in their cultural vocabulary is very large, the literary form of the language will be rich in Sanskrit *tadbhava* and *tatsama* words. This form alone will be easily intelligible to the people whose mother tongue is not Hindustani, and to this form alone can they, as they increasingly must, make their contributions. But this will not prevent a large number of Persian-Arabic words from being used."

Dr. Tara Chand argues that the names Hindi, Urdu and Hindustani indicate one and the same language. For, the sound system of all the three is identical, while their grammar is also more or less the same. In regard to vocabulary there are numerous original words, particularly verbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections which are common to all of them. This provides a sound basis for the development of the national language, Hindustani, which is not an artificially created form of speech, but has a history of about a thousand years behind it. Modern Hindi and Urdu are merely two literary styles of Hindustani. Dr. Tara Chand advocates certain practical measures for bridging the gulf between

Hindi and Urdu. He suggests that the Urdu-speaking people should be encouraged to study modern Hindi even as the Hindi-speaking people should be made to acquire a satisfactory knowledge of Urdu; a good dictionary of words used by Hindi and Urdu writers, as also a dictionary of common technical terms should be compiled; the phonetic and morphological systems of Hindi and Urdu and their rules of combination and derivation should be presented in a new modern grammar; anthologies of easy Hindi and Urdu prose and verse should be prepared and popularised. If all this is done and the Hindi and Urdu writers arrive at an agreement in regard to words for scientific and technical purposes, the problem of language would be easily solved.

Mr. Asaf Ali regards the present-day style of some of the Urdu writers, who virtually write Persian with Urdu verbs, as an extreme case of the decadence of Urdu. He is equally opposed to difficult and over-sanskritised Hindi. The Hindustani of his conception stands nearest to simplified Urdu.

Mr. K. M. Munshi maintains that long before Urdu came into existence, a language called Hindi with a vocabulary of predominantly Sanskritic words had become the language of literature, and even many Muslim writers had enriched it. Urdu developed later out of the Hindi that was spoken in the army of the Moghal Emperors. He does not consider the Hindi and Urdu of today as two separate languages, but he recognises that

they do represent two distinct literary currents. The medium of ordinary social intercourse in the United Provinces may be called Hindustani, which has, however, not yet been sufficiently enriched to become the language of literature. Hindi and Urdu can be brought to a meeting point by consciously developing the Hindustani of the United Provinces into a literary language, though in order to make this Hindustani acceptable to the majority of people in the country it will be necessary to increase to some extent its Sanskritic content. This task would be considerably facilitated if Hindi and Urdu works are translated and transcribed into each other more freely and if the Hindi and Urdu writers begin to use the best and the most expressive words without any prejudice in respect of their origin and derivation. Mr. Munshi is a strong supporter of the Devanagari script.

Mr. Rajagopalachariar considers Hindustani as a more appropriate name for the national language than either Hindi or Urdu. He is against the exclusion of any words from the national language on the ground of their being foreign or non-Indian. As he says "words derived from Persian or Arabic and words derived from Sanskrit and words marked original Hindi in the dictionaries are *all* necessary to make a language rich." Though he considers the Devanagari script to be superior to the Urdu script he would, from the point of view of national unity, like both these scripts to be recognised as current and official.

Khwaja Ghulam-us-Saiyidain feels that, "no

language can have the least chance of becoming the common language of India which is not the product of the cultural contact of the two major communities, the Hindus and the Muslims, and to which both have not contributed in full measure." He thinks that Hindustani satisfies both these tests. Modern over-sanskritised Hindi cannot become our national language because, firstly, it is not spoken anywhere by a large section of the people, and, secondly it is not the product of Hindu-Muslim co-operation. Highly Arabicized and Persianized Urdu is similarly ruled out of order. The real Hindustani which constitutes the nucleus of our national speech, is "near enough to earlier Hindi and nearer to simple Urdu." With the inevitable widening and democratisation of political life, Hindustani will naturally grow in importance and will develop "to cement the bonds which unite the people of this great land." Hindi and Urdu will indeed not be supplanted by Hindustani, but they would be confined to the realm of poetry and literature.

Pandit Sumittranandan Pant believes in a common language, but he is convinced that it is rather premature to raise this problem at present. According to him "the problem of linguistic unity is a part of the larger problem of cultural unity," and until the latter is solved the former will continue to present insuperable difficulties.

Dr. Mohammad Din Taseer recognises that the conflict between Urdu and Hindi is real and serious. He also holds that Hindustani is yet

an undeveloped speech. Under these circumstances, it seems to him doubtful if the attempts at the creation of a common national language would yield useful results. He, therefore, suggests that for the time being we should cease to be obsessed with the idea of having a national speech and should concentrate instead on enriching and developing local languages and dialects. As he says, "Our aim is to educate the masses on the right lines, to communicate with them in the easiest possible manner, in the languages nearest to them, their mother tongues. We want to prepare them for the struggle for freedom. It will require a good many years to make one common language and then teach it to the illiterate millions of India. Surely you are not going to wait for freedom until then? And once you have freedom you need not worry about the language problem." Dr. Taseer believes that ultimately the problem of divergent languages and cultures in India shall have to be tackled, along the line evolved in the U. S. S. R.

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya thinks that the language problem is no longer the close preserve of North India. The people of the South claim to have an equal say in the matter. Hindi or Hindustani is now beyond dispute the national language. In order to make this national language universally popular, it is necessary that "besides a list of basic words, we must evolve a list of at least one thousand words and expressions which are of classical origin on either side and which

must be learnt up by both Hindus and Mussalmans, for half of the words are strange to either group."

Prof. Humayun Kabir emphasises the great importance of a common script in the evolution of a national language. He thinks that most of the complications which surround the Hindi-Urdu question would soon disappear if, from now on, we start writing Hindi and Urdu in one script. He advocates the immediate adoption of the Roman script for national and inter-provincial purposes.

Dr. Bhagwan Das is of the opinion that it is necessary to build up the Hindustani language as almost a new language, which "yet shall be composed of almost wholly Hindi and Urdu elements with a few words of other languages as well, notably English."

The above summary of the views of those who have contributed to this symposium will introduce the reader to the various standpoints on the problem of language. It is obvious that in view of this diversity of opinion the solution of the question seems to be far from easy. And yet if we want to solve it satisfactorily, we have to examine every point of view calmly and dispassionately. The tinsel has to be separated from gold. The object of this book will have been served if it provides the readers with some food for thought, and stimulates in at least some of them the desire to undertake a more comprehensive and scientific investigation of the problem.

The General Secretary of the All India Congress Committee has kindly permitted me to reprint here Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's essay on the language question. I also acknowledge with thanks the permission given by the All India Radio to reprint the articles of Babu Rajendra Prasad and Dr. Zakir Hussain. Mr. K. M. Munshi's article has been taken from his book "I follow the Mahatma" (published by the Allied Publishers and Stationery Manufacturers, Bombay) with the kind permission of the author and the publishers. Above all, I am highly thankful to those who have contributed to this symposium.

Allahabad
Nov. 3, 1940.

Z. A. Ahmad

MAHATMA GANDHI

The Indian culture of our times is in the making. Many of us are striving to produce a blend of all the cultures which seem today to be in clash with one another. No culture can live, if it attempts to be exclusive. There is no such thing as pure Aryan culture in existence today in India. Whether the Aryans were indigenous to India or were unwelcome intruders, does not interest me much. What does interest me is the fact that my remote ancestors blended with one another with the utmost freedom and we of the present generation are a result of that blend. Whether we are doing any good to the country of our birth and the tiny globe which sustains us or whether we are a burden, the future alone will show.

HINDUSTANI

I shall begin at the beginning. For many years past the Congress has been advocating a common speech as the necessary counterpart of a common political aspiration. From the literary point of view this has involved public speakers in many sins of omission and commission, but I know that in Urdu literary circles, it has created a standard of simplicity and homeliness that was unknown before. Even a writer like Maulana

Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, who has spent all his life reading Arabic books and treating subjects possessing a terminology that could not be amended without disrespect, took to simplifying and 'Indianizing' his language with grim earnestness, because the ideal of a common Indian language was so dear to him.

This common language was called 'Hindustani' in Congress circles, though the Congress did not come to any definite understanding with Urdu and Hindi speakers on the question of this name. But names, as you know, have enormous political and social significance because of their associations, and the name to be given to our common language is therefore very important. So far Urdu has been the only language not confined to a province or a religious community: it has been spoken by Mussalmans all over India, and in the North the number of Hindus speaking it has been larger than the number of the Mussalmans. If our common language cannot be called Urdu, it must at least have a name in which the peculiar contribution of the Mussalmans—that of having evolved a language more or less common—is implied. 'Hindustani' may serve the purpose. 'Hindi' cannot. It has been studied by Mussalmans in the past, and they have done as much, if not more, than their Hindu brethren to raise it to the status of a literary language. But it has also religious and cultural associations with which Mussalmans as a whole cannot identify themselves. Besides, it is now evolving a vocabulary that is

exclusively its own, and is generally unintelligible to those who know only Urdu.

It would not have been relevant to emphasize this, had there not been a marked tendency to confuse Hindi and Hindustani, but never Urdu and Hindustani.

It is quite clear that Sanskrit and Arabic are both rich in technical terms, but a common Indian language cannot rely exclusively on either of them, for if Arabic is a foreign language, Sanskrit has never been generally spoken, and anyone who cares to study the spoken Hindi will find that all the Sanskrit words it contains have, in course of time, undergone considerable transformation, because they cannot be pronounced with ease—not by the Mussalmans, but (nor ?) by the Indian masses. Even short words like ग्राम and वर्ष have become गांव and बरस. These facts are all ignored by many advocates of Hindi, for they have substituted the original Sanskrit forms of these and many other words, whether this is due to pedantry or ignorance or prejudice—because the spoken forms of Sanskrit words have all been adopted by Urdu—it is not for me to say. But it is quite obvious that these friends are not directly concerned with the propagation of the living, spoken language, but rather with the Aryanization of Indian life. It is no concern of the Mussalmans if our Hindu brethren work for reform or reaction among themselves, but common honesty demands that such movements be kept strictly apart from the linguistic problem.

In his reply to a letter from Adil Saheb, Sjt. K. M. Munshi says that the Gujaratis, Maharashtris, Bengalis, and Keralites "have built up literary traditions in which pure Urdu elements are almost non-existent. If we take to Hindi, in the very nature of things we will take to Sanskritic Hindi." In the first place, I know for certain that Gujarati, Marathi and Bengali all contain a considerable number of Persian words, and I am not prepared to admit that the Hindus of Gujarat and Bengal must Sanskritize their speech to come close to each other and to the Mussalmans. Besides, it is not "pure Urdu elements" with which we are concerned, but the living language and idioms of Northern India. If this living language is taken as the basis for a common language, the Mussalmans can co-operate effectively. A reversion to Sanskrit means that they and all their past services to Hindi, Bengali and Gujarati are to be passed over. To ask for co-operation from us under such conditions is nothing less than asking us to be accomplices in our own suicide.

I am giving below a number of points which in my humble opinion are rational in themselves and provide a sound basis for a common language.

The points are :

1. That our common language shall be called 'Hindustani', not 'Hindi'.

2. That Hindustani shall not be considered to have any peculiar association with the religious traditions of any community.

3. That the test of 'foreign' and 'indigenous'

shall not be applied to any word, but only the test of currency.

4. That all words used by Hindu writers of Urdu and Muslims writers of Hindi shall be deemed current. This of course shall not apply to Urdu and Hindi as sectional languages.

5. That in the choice of technical terms, specially political terminology, no preference be given to Sanskrit terms as such, but as much room as possible be allowed for natural selection from among Urdu, Hindi and Sanskrit terms.

6. That the Devanagari and the Arabic scripts shall both be considered current and official, and that in all institutions whose policy is directed by the official promoters of Hindustani, facilities shall be provided for learning both scripts.

Hindi-Urdu Controversy

It is a great pity that bitter controversy has taken place and still continues regarding the Hindi-Urdu question. So far as the Congress is concerned Hindustani is its recognized official language designed as an all India language for inter-provincial contact. It is not to supplant but to supplement the provincial languages. The recent resolution of the Working Committee should set all doubt at rest. If the Congressmen who have to do all India work will only take the trouble of learning Hindustani in both the scripts, we shall have taken many strides in the direction of our common language goal. The real competition

is not between Hindi and Urdu but between Hindustani and English. It is a tough fight. I am certainly watching it with grave concern.

Hindi-Urdu controversy has no bottom. Hindustani of the Congress conception has yet to be crystallized into shape. It will not be so long as Congress proceedings are not conducted exclusively in Hindustani. The Congress will have to prescribe the dictionaries for use by Congressmen and a department will have to supply new words outside the dictionaries. It is great work, it is work worth doing, if we are really to have a living, growing all India speech. The department will have to determine which of the existing literature shall be considered as Hindustani, books, magazines, weeklies, dailies, whether written in Urdu script or Devanagari. It is serious work needing a vast amount of plodding if it is to achieve success.

For the purpose of crystallizing Hindustani, Hindi and Urdu may be regarded as feeders. A Congressman must therefore wish well to both and keep in touch with both in so far as he can.

This Hindustani will have many synonyms to supply the varied requirements of a growing nation rich in provincial languages. Hindustani spoken to Bengali or Southern audiences will naturally have a large stock of words of Sanskrit origin. The same speech delivered in the Punjab will have a large admixture of words of Arabic or Persian origin. Similar will be the case with audiences composed predominantly of Muslims

who cannot understand many words of Sanskrit origin. All India speakers will have therefore to command a Hindustani vocabulary which will enable them to feel at home with audiences drawn from all parts of India. Pandit Malaviyaji's name comes uppermost in this connection. I have known him handle Hindi-speaking and Urdu-speaking audiences with equal ease. I have never found him in want of the correct word. The same is true of Babu Bhagvandas who uses synonymous words in the same speech, and he sees to it that it does not lose in grace. Among the Muslims at the time of writing I can think of only Maulana Mohamed Ali whose vocabulary was varied enough to suit both audiences. His knowledge of Gujarati acquired in Baroda service stood him in good stead.

Independently of the Congress, Hindi and Urdu will continue to flourish. Hindi will be mostly confined to Hindus and Urdu to Muslims. As a matter of fact, comparatively speaking, there are very few Muslims who know Hindi well enough to be called scholars, though I expect, in Hindi-speaking parts, to Muslims born there, Hindi is the mother tongue. There are thousands of Hindus whose mother tongue is Urdu and there are hundreds who can be aptly described as Urdu scholars. Pandit Motilalji was one such. Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru is another. Illustrations can be easily multiplied. There is therefore no reason for any quarrel or unhealthy competition between the two sisters. Healthy competition

there always must be.

From all accounts I have received it seems that, under the able guidance of Moulvi Saheb Abdul Haq, the Osmania University is rendering great service to the cause of Urdu. The University has a big Urdu lexicon. Scientific treatises have been and are being prepared in Urdu. And as the teaching is being honestly imparted through Urdu in that University, it must grow. And if, owing to unreasoning prejudice today, all Hindi-speaking Hindus do not profit by the literature that is growing there, it is their fault. But the prejudice has to die. For, the present disunion between the communities is, like all diseases, only temporary. For good or for ill, the two communities are wedded to India, they are neighbours, sons of the soil. They are destined to die here as they are born here. Nature will force them to live in peace if they do not come together voluntarily.

I know that there are some who dream that there shall be only Urdu or only Hindi. I think it will always remain a dream and it is an unholy dream. Islam has its own peculiar culture, so has Hinduism its own. India of the future will be a perfect and happy blend of both. When that blessed day comes, their common speech will be Hindustani. But Urdu will still flourish with a predominance of Arabic and Persian words, and Hindi will still flourish with its abundant Sanskrit vocabulary. The language of Tulsidas and Surdas cannot die, even as the language in which

Shibli wrote cannot die. But the best of both will be quite at home with Hindustani speech.

A correspondent says a great deal is being written against me in the Urdu press in regard to my attitude towards Urdu. They even go so far as to suggest that though I speak about Hindu-Muslim unity I am the most communally-minded of all the Hindus.

I have no desire to defend myself against the suggestion referred to by my correspondent. My life must be my credentials on my attitude regarding the Hindu-Muslim question.

But the Hindi-Urdu question is an evergreen. Though I have expressed my views often enough on this question, they will bear repetition. I shall simply enunciate my belief without advancing any argument in support.

I believe that

1. Hindi, Hindustani and Urdu are words denoting the same language spoken in the North by Hindus and Mussalmans and written in either Devanagari or Persian script.

2. Hindi was the name for this language used both by Hindus and Mussalmans before the word Urdu came to be used.

3. The word Hindustani also came to be used later (the date unknown to me) to denote the same speech.

4. Both Hindus and Mussalmans should try to speak the language as understood by the vast mass of the people in the North.

5. At the same time many Hindus and many

Mussalmans will persist in using Sanskrit words and Persian or Arabic words respectively and exclusively. This we shall have to bear so long as mutual distrust and aloofness continue. Those Hindus who care to know a certain class of Mussalman thought will study Urdu written in Persian script, and similarly those Mussalmans who care to know a certain class of Hindu thought will study Hindi written in Devanagari script.

6. Ultimately when our hearts have become one and we all are proud of India as our country, rather than our provinces, and shall know and practice different religions as derived from one common source, as we know and relish different fruits of the same tree, we shall reach a common language with a common script whilst we shall retain provincial languages for provincial use.

7. The attempt to force one script or one form of Hindi on any province or district or people is detrimental to the best interest of the country.

8. The common language question should be viewed apart from the religious differences.

9. Roman script cannot and should not be the common script of India. The rivalry can only be between Persian and Devanagari. Apart from its intrinsic merit the latter should be the common script for all India because most of the provincial scripts have their origin in Devanagari and it is for them by far the easiest to learn. At the same time no attempt whatsoever should be made to foist it upon Mussalmans and for that matter on those others who do not know it.

10. I served the cause of Urdu, if it may be distinguished from Hindi, when at Indore the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan at my instance accepted the definition given in clause 1, and when at Nagpur at my instance the Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad accepted the definition and called the common language of inter-provincial intercourse Hindi or Hindustani, thus giving fullest scope to both Mussalmans and Hindus to identify themselves with the effort to enrich the common language and to interpret the best provincial thought in that language.

The Question of Script

There remains the question of script. At the present moment insistence on Devanagari by Mussalmans is not to be thought of. Insistence on the adoption of Arabic script by the vast mass of Hindus is still less thinkable. What therefore I have suggested as the definition of Hindi or Hindustani is 'that language which is generally spoken by Hindus and Mussalmans of the North, whether written in Devanagari or Urdu.' I abide by that definition, in spite of protests to the contrary. But there is undoubtedly a Devanagari movement with which I have allied myself whole-heartedly and that is to have it as the common script for all the languages spoken in the different provinces, especially those which have a large Sanskrit vocabulary. Anyway an attempt is being made to transcribe in Devanagari script the most precious treasures of all the languages of India.

Different languages descended from or inti-

mately connected with Sanskrit ought to have one script and that is surely Devanagari. Different scripts are an unnecessary hindrance to the learning by the people of one province the language of other provinces. Even Europe which is not one nation has generally adopted one script. Why should India, which claims to be and is one nation, not have one script? I know I am inconsistent when I tolerate both Devanagari and Urdu scripts for the same language. But my inconsistency is not quite foolish. There is Hindu-Muslim friction at the present moment. It is wise and necessary for the educated Hindus and Muslims to show mutual respect and toleration to the utmost extent possible. Hence the option for Devanagari or Urdu scripts. Happily there is no friction between provinces and provinces. Hence the desirability of advocating a reform which means a closer knitting together of provinces in more ways than one. And let it be remembered that the vast mass of the people are wholly illiterate. It would be suicidal to impose on them different scripts for no other reason than a false sentiment and laziness to think.

I understand that some of the tribes in Assam are being taught to read and write through the Roman script instead of Devanagari. I have already expressed my opinion that the only script that is ever likely to be universal in India is Devanagari, either reformed or as it is. Urdu or Persian will go hand in hand unless Muslims of their own free will acknowledge the superiority of

Devanagari from a purely scientific and national standpoint. But this is irrelevant to the present problem. The Roman cannot go hand in hand with the other two scripts. Protagonists of the Roman script would displace both. But sentiment and science alike are against the Roman script. Its sole merit is its convenience for printing and typing purposes. But that is nothing compared to the strain its learning would put upon millions. It can be of no help to the millions who have to read their own literature either in their own provincial scripts or in Devanagari. Devanagari is easier for the millions of Hindus and even Muslims to learn, because the provincial scripts are mostly derived from Devanagari. I have included Muslims advisedly. The mother tongue of Bengali Muslims, for instance, is Bengali as is Tamil of Tamil Muslims. The present movement for the propagation of Urdu will, as it should, result in Muslims all over India learning Urdu in addition to their mother tongue. They must, in any case, know Arabic for the purpose of learning the Holy Quran. But the millions whether Hindus or Muslims will never need the Roman script except when they wish to learn English. Similarly Hindus who want to read their scriptures in the original have to and do learn the Devanagari script. The movement for universalizing the Devanagari script has thus a sound basis. The introduction of the Roman script is a superimposition which can never become popular. And all superimpositions will be swept out of existence when the

true mass awakening comes, as it is coming, much sooner than any of us can expect from known causes. Yet the awakening of millions does take time. It cannot be manufactured. It comes or seems to come mysteriously. National workers can merely hasten the process by anticipating the mass mind.

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

We have had during recent months a revival of the old controversy between Hindi and Urdu, and high excitement has accompanied it and charges and counter-charges have been flung about. A subject eminently suited for calm and scholarly consideration and academic debate has been dragged down to the level of the market place and communal passions have centred round it. Inevitably, many of the champions who have entered the field of battle have little to do with scholarship or the love of a language for its own sake; they have been chiefly concerned with Government orders and court procedure. Those who love language as the embodiment of culture, of airy thought caught in the network of words and phrases, of ideas crystallized of fine shades of meaning, of the music and rhythm that accompany it, of the fascinating history and associations of its words, of the picture of life in all its phases, those to whom a language is dear because of all this and more, wondered at this vulgar argument and kept away from it.

And yet we cannot keep away from it or ignore it, for the question of language is an important one for us. It is not important because of that cry of the ignorant that India is a babel of tongues

with hundreds and hundreds of languages. India, as everyone who looks round him can see, has singularly few languages considering its vast size, and these are intimately allied to each other. India has also one dominant and widespread language which, with its variations, covers a vast area and numbers its votaries by the hundred million. Yet the problem remains and has to be faced.

It has to be faced for the moment because of its communal and political implications. But that is a temporary matter and will pass. The real problem will remain: as to what policy we shall adopt in a scheme of general mass education and the cultural development of the people; how shall we promote the unity of India and yet preserve the rich diversity of our inheritance?

The question of language is ever one of great consequence for a people. Almost exactly three hundred years ago Milton, writing from Florence to a friend, emphasized this and said: "Nor is it to be considered of small consequence what language, pure or corrupt, a people has, or what is their customary degree of propriety in speaking it..... for let the words of a country be in part unhandsome and offensive in themselves, in part debased by wear and wrongly uttered, and what do they declare, but, by no light indication, that the inhabitants of that country are an indolent, idly-yawning race, with minds already long prepared for any amount of servility? On the other hand we have never heard that any empire, any state, did not at least flourish in a middling degree as

long as its own liking and care for its language lasted."

II

A living language is a throbbing, vital thing, ever changing, ever growing and mirroring the people who speak and write it. It has its roots in the masses, though its superstructure may represent the culture of a few. How then can we change it or shape it to our liking by resolutions or orders from above? And yet I find this widely prevalent notion that we can force a language to behave in a particular manner if we only will it so. It is true that under modern conditions with mass education and mass propaganda through the press, printed books, cinema and the radio, a language can be varied much more rapidly than in past times. And yet that variation is but the mirror of the rapid changes taking place among the people who use it. If a language loses touch with the people, it loses its vitality and becomes an artificial, lifeless thing, instead of the thing of life and strength and joy that it should be. Attempts to force the growth of a language in a particular direction are likely to end in distorting it and crushing its spirit.

III

What should be the policy of the State in regard to language? The Congress has briefly but clearly and definitely stated this in the resolution on Fundamental Rights: "The culture, lang-

uage and script of the minorities and of the different linguistic areas shall be protected." By this declaration the Congress is bound and no minority or linguistic group can require a wider assurance. Further the Congress has stated in its constitution, as well as in many resolutions, that while the common language of the country should be Hindustani, the provincial languages should be dominant in their respective areas. A language cannot be imposed by resolution, and the Congress desire to develop a common language and carry on most of our work in the provincial languages would be pious wishes, ignored by the multitude, if they did not fit in with existing conditions and the needs of the situation. We have thus to see how far they so fit in.

IV

Our great provincial languages are no dialects or vernaculars as the ignorant sometimes call them. They are ancient languages with a rich inheritance, each spoken by many millions of persons, each tied up inextricably with the life and culture and ideas of the masses as well as of the upper classes. If is axiomatic that the masses can only grow educationally and culturally through the medium of their own language. Therefore it is inevitable that we lay stress on the provincial languages and carry on most of our work through them. The use of any other language will result in isolating the educated few from the masses and of retarding

the growth of the people. Ever since the Congress took to the use of these provincial languages in carrying on its work, we developed contacts with the masses rapidly and the strength and prestige of the Congress increased all over the country. The Congress message reached the most distant hamlet and the political consciousness of the masses grew. Our system of education and public work must therefore be based on the provincial languages.

What are these languages? Hindustani, of course, with its principal aspects of Hindi and Urdu, and its various dialects. Then there are Bengali, Marathi and Gujrati, sister languages of Hindi and nearly allied to it. In the South there are Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam. Besides these there are Oriya, Assamese and Sindhi, and Panjabi and Pushtu in the North-West. These dozen languages cover the whole of India, and of these, Hindustani has the widest range and also claims a certain all-India character.

V

Without infringing in the least on the domain of the provincial languages, we must have a common all-India medium of communication. Some people imagine that English might serve as such, and to some extent English has served as such for our upper classes and for all-India political purposes. But this is manifestly impossible if we think in terms of the masses. We cannot edu-

cate millions of people in a totally foreign tongue. English will inevitably remain an important language for us because of our past associations and because of its present importance in the world. It will be the principal medium for us to communicate with the outside world, though I hope it will not be the only medium for this purpose. I think we should cultivate other foreign languages also, such as French, German, Russian, Spanish, Italian, Chinese and Japanese. But English cannot develop into an all-India language, known by millions.

The only possible all-India language is Hindustani. Already it is spoken by a hundred and twenty millions and partly understood by scores of millions of others. Even those who do not know it at all at present can learn it far more easily than a foreign language. There are many common words in all the languages of India, but what is far more important is the common cultural background of these languages, the similarity of ideas and the many linguistic affinities. This makes it relatively easy for an Indian to learn another Indian language.

VI

What is Hindustani? Vaguely we say that this word includes both Hindi and Urdu, as spoken and as written in the two scripts, and we endeavour to strike a golden mean between the two, and call this idea of ours Hindustani. Is this just an idea with no reality for its basis, or is it something more?

There are many variations in Hindustani as spoken and written in various parts of northern and central India. Numerous dialects have arisen. But these are the inevitable consequences of want of education, and with mass education these dialects will tend to disappear and a certain standardisation will set in.

There is the question of script. Devanagari and the Urdu script are utterly different from each other and there is no possibility of either of them assimilating the other. Therefore wisely we have agreed that both should have full play. This will be an additional burden on those who have to learn both and it will encourage separatism to some extent. But we have to put up with these disadvantages for any other course is not open to us. Both the scripts are part of the genius of our language and around them have gathered not only literatures peculiar to the scripts, but also a wall of sentiment which is solid and irremovable. What the distant future will bring to us I do not know, but for the present both must remain.

The Latin script has been advocated as a solution of some of our linguistic difficulties. It is certainly more efficient than either Hindi or Urdu from the point of view of rapid work. In these days of the type-writer and duplicator and other mechanical devices, the Latin script has great advantages over the Indian scripts which cannot utilise fully these new devices. But in spite of these advantages I do not think there is the slightest chance of the Latin script replacing Devanagari or

Urdu. There is the wall of sentiment of course, strengthened even more by the fact that the Latin script is associated with our alien rulers. But there are more solid grounds also for its rejection. The scripts are essential parts of our literatures; without them we would be largely cut off from our old inheritance.

It may be possible however to reform our scripts to some extent. We have at present, besides Hindi and Urdu, the Bengali, Marathi and Gujrati scripts, each of these three being very nearly allied to Devanagari. It should be easily possible to have a common script for these four languages. This need not necessarily be Devanagari, exactly as it is written today, but a slight variation of it. The development of a common script for Hindi, Bengali, Gujrati and Marathi would be a definite gain and would bring the four languages much nearer to each other.

I do not know how far it is possible for the Dravidian languages of the south to fit in with a northern script, or to evolve a common script for themselves. Those who have studied this might enlighten us on this point.

The Urdu script has to remain as it is, though some slight simplification of it might be attempted. It might easily absorb the Sindhi script which is very similar to it.

Thus we ought to have later on two scripts: the composite Devanagari-Bengali-Marathi-Gujrati, and the Urdu, and also, if necessary, a southern script. No attempt must be made to suppress any

one of these, unless there is a possibility by general agreement of those concerned to fit in the southern languages with a northern script, which is likely to be Hindi, or a slight variation of it.

VII

Let us consider Hindustani both as the mother tongue of the north and central India, and as an all-India language. The two aspects are different and must be dealt with separately.

Hindi and Urdu are the two main aspects of this language. Obviously they have the same basis, the same grammar, the same fund of ordinary words to draw upon. They are in fact the same basic language. And yet the present differences are considerable, and one is said to draw its inspiration from Sanskrit and the other to some extent from Persian. To consider Hindi as the language of the Hindus and Urdu as that of the Muslims is absurd. Urdu, except for its script, is of the very soil of India and has no place outside India. It is even today the home language of large numbers of Hindus in the North.

The coming of Muslim rulers to India brought Persian as a court language and, to the end of the Moghal period, Persian continued to be so used. The language of the people in north and central India continued to be Hindi throughout. Being a living language it absorbed a number of Persian words; Gujrati and Marathi did likewise. But essentially Hindi remained Hindi. A highly

persianised form of Hindi developed round the Imperial courts but this was called *Rekhta*. The word Urdu seems to have come into use during the Moghal period in the camps of the Moghals, but it appears to have been used almost synonymously with Hindi. It did not signify even a variation of Hindi. Right upto the Revolt of 1857, Urdu meant Hindi, except in regard to script. As is well known some of the finest Hindi poets have been Muslims. Till this Revolt and even for some time after, the usual term applied to the language was Hindi. This did not refer to the script but to the language, the language of Hind. Muslims who wrote in the Urdu script usually called the language Hindi.

It was in the second half of the nineteenth century that the words Hindi and Urdu began to signify something different from each other. This separatism grew. Probably it was a reflex of the rising national consciousness which first affected the Hindus, who began to lay stress on purer Hindi and the Devanagari script. Nationalism was for them inevitably at the beginning a form of Hindu nationalism. A little later the Muslims slowly developed their form of nationalism, which was Muslim nationalism, and this began to consider Urdu as their own particular preserve. Controversy centred round the scripts and the use of them in courts and public offices. Thus the growing separatism in language and the conflict of scripts was the outcome of the growth of political and national consciousness, which to begin with

took a communal turn. As this nationalism became truly national, thinking in terms of India and not in those of a particular community, the desire to stop this separatist tendency in language grew with it, and intelligent people began to lay stress on the innumerable common features of Hindi and Urdu. There was talk of Hindustani not only as the language of northern and central India but as the national language of the whole country. But still, unfortunately, communalism is strong enough in India and so the separatist tendency persists along with the unifying tendency. This separatism in language is bound to disappear with the fuller development of nationalism. It is well to bear this in mind for only then shall we understand what the root cause of the evil is. Scratch a separatist in language and you will invariably find that he is a communalist, and very often a political reactionary.

VIII

Although the terms Hindi and Urdu were interchangeably used for a long time during the Moghal period, Urdu was applied more to the language of the mixed camps of the Moghals. Round about the court and camp many Persian words were current and these crept into the language. As one moves southwards, away from the centres of Moghal court life, Urdu merges into purer Hindi. Inevitably this influence of the courts affected the towns far more than the rural areas,

and the towns of the north far more than the towns of central India.

And this leads us to the real difference between Urdu and Hindi today—Urdu is the language of the towns and Hindi the language of the villages. Hindi is of course spoken also in the towns, but Urdu is almost entirely an urban language. The problem of bringing Urdu and Hindi nearer to each other thus becomes the much vaster problem of bringing the town and the village nearer to each other. Every other way will be a superficial way without lasting effect. Languages change organically when the people who speak them change.

IX

While Hindi and Urdu of ordinary household speech do not differ much from each other, the gulf between the literary languages has grown in recent years. In written literary productions it is formidable, and this has led some people to believe that some evil-minded persons are the cause of it. That is a foolish fancy, though undoubtedly there are individuals who take delight in increasing separatist tendencies. But living languages do not function in this way, nor can they be twisted much by a few individuals. We have to look deeper for the causes of this apparent divergence.

This divergence, though unfortunate in itself, is really a sign of healthy growth. Both Hindi and Urdu, after a long period of stagnation, have woken up and are pushing ahead. They are

struggling to give expression to new ideas, and leaving the old ruts for new forms of literary expression. The vocabulary of each is poor as far as these new ideas are concerned, but each can draw on a rich source. This source is Sanskrit in the one case and Persian in the other, and hence as soon as we leave the ordinary language of the home or the market place and enter more abstract regions, the divergences grow. Literary societies, jealous of the purity of the language they use, carry this tendency to extreme limits, and then accuse each other of encouraging separatist tendencies. The beam in one's own eye is not seen, the mote in the other's eye is obvious enough.

The immediate result of all this has been to increase the gulf between Hindi and Urdu and sometimes it almost appears that the two are destined to develop into separate languages. And yet this fear is unjustified and there is no reason for alarm. We must welcome the new life that is coursing through both Hindi and Urdu even though it might lead to a temporary widening of the gulf. Hindi and Urdu are both at present inadequate for the proper expression of modern ideas, scientific, political, economic, commercial and sometimes cultural, and they are both trying hard, and with success, to enrich themselves so as to meet the needs of a modern community. Why should either be jealous of the other? We want our language to be as rich as possible and this will not happen if we try to suppress either Hindi words or Urdu words because we feel that they do not

fit in with our own particular backgrounds. We want both and we must accept both. We must realise that the growth of Hindi means the growth of Urdu and *vice versa*. The two will powerfully influence each other and the vocabulary and ideas of each will grow. But each must keep its doors and windows wide open for these words and ideas. Indeed I would like Hindi and Urdu to welcome and absorb words and ideas from foreign languages and make them their own. It is absurd to coin new words from the Sanskrit or Persian for well known and commonly used words in English or French or other foreign languages.

I have no doubt in my mind that Hindi and Urdu must come nearer to each other, and though they may wear different garbs, will be essentially one language. The forces favouring this unification are too strong to be resisted by individuals. We have nationalism and the widespread desire to have a united India, and this must triumph. But stronger than this is the effect of rapid communications and transport and interchange of ideas and revolutionary changes going on in our political and social spheres. We cannot remain in our narrow grooves when the torrent of world change rushes past us. Education when it spreads to the masses will also inevitably produce standardisation and unification.

X

We must not therefore look even upon the

separate development of Hindi and Urdu with suspicion. The enthusiast for Urdu should welcome the new spirit that is animating Hindi and the lover of Hindi should equally appreciate the labours of those who seek to advance Urdu. They may work today along parallel lines somewhat separate from each other, but the two will coalesce. Nevertheless, though we tolerate willingly this existing separatism, we must help in the process of this unification. On what must this unity be based? Surely on the masses. The masses must be the common factor between Hindi and Urdu. Most of our present troubles are due to highly artificial literary languages cut off from the masses. When writers write, who do they write for? Every writer must have, consciously or sub-consciously, an audience in his mind, whom he is seeking to influence or convert to his viewpoint. Because of our vast illiteracy, that audience has unhappily been limited, but even so it is big enough and it will grow rapidly. I am no expert in this matter but my own impression is that the average writer in Hindi or Urdu does not seek to take advantage of even the existing audience. He thinks much more of the literary coteries in which he moves, and writes for them in the language that they have come to appreciate. His voice and his word do not reach the much larger public, and if they happen to reach this public, they are not understood. Is it surprising that Hindi and Urdu books have restricted sales? Even our newspapers in Hindi and Urdu barely tap the great reading public be-

cause they too generally use the language of the literary coteries.

Our writers therefore must think in terms of a mass audience and clientele and must deliberately seek to write for them. This will result automatically in the simplification of language, and the stilted and flowery phrases and constructions, which are always signs of decadence in a language, will give place to words of strength and power. We have not yet fully recovered from the notion that culture and literary attainments are the products and accompaniments of courtly circles. If we think in this way we remain confined in narrow circles and can find no entrance to the hearts and minds of the masses. Culture today must have a wider mass basis, and language, which is one of the embodiments of that culture, must also have that basis.

This approach to the masses is not merely a question of simple words and phrases. It is equally a matter of ideas and of the inner content of those words and phrases. Language which is to make appeal to the masses must deal with the problems of those masses, with their joys and sorrows, their hopes and aspirations. It must represent and mirror the life of the people as a whole and not that of a small group at the top. Then only will it have its roots in the soil and find sustenance from it.

This applies not only to Hindi and Urdu but to all our Indian languages. I know that in all of them these ideas are finding utterance and they

are looking more and more towards the masses. This process must be accelerated and our writers should deliberately aim at encouraging it.

It is also desirable, I think, for our languages to cultivate contacts with foreign literatures by means of translations of both the old classics and modern books. This will put us in touch with cultural and literary and social movements in other countries and will strengthen our own languages by the infusion of fresh ideas.

I imagine that probably Bengali, of all Indian languages, has gone furthest in developing contacts with the masses. Literary Bengali is not something apart from and far removed from the life of the people of Bengal. The genius of one man, Rabindra Nath Tagore, has bridged that gap between the cultured few and the masses, and today his beautiful songs and poems are heard even in the humblest hut. They have not only added to the wealth of Bengali literature but enriched the life of the people of Bengal, and made of their language a powerful medium of the finest literary expression in the simplest terms. We cannot produce geniuses for the asking but we can all learn from this and shape our own course accordingly. In this connection I should also like to mention Gujrati. I am told that Gandhiji's simple and powerful language has had a great influence on modern Gujrati writing.

XI

Let us now consider the other aspect of Hindustani as an all-India language, bearing in mind that it is no rival to the great provincial languages and there is no question of its encroaching on them. For the moment let us set aside the question of script, for both scripts must have full play. We cannot of course insist on every one learning both scripts; that would be an intolerable burden for the masses. The State should encourage both scripts and leave the persons concerned, or their parents, to choose between the two. Let us therefore consider the content of the language apart from its script.

Apart from its widespread range and dominance over India, Hindustani has certain other advantages as an all-India language. It is relatively easy to learn and its grammar is simple, except for the confusion of its genders. Can we simplify it still further?

We have a remarkably successful experiment to guide us, that of *Basic English*. A number of scholars, after many years labour, have evolved a simplified form of English which is essentially English and indistinguishable from it, and yet which is astonishingly easy to learn. Grammar has almost disappeared except for a few simple rules and the basic vocabulary has been reduced to about 980 words, excluding scientific, technical and commercial terms. This whole vocabulary and grammar can be put down on one sheet of

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paper and an intelligent person can learn it in two or three weeks. He will require practice of course in the use of the new language.

This experiment must not be confused with the many previous attempts to evolve a common world language—Volapuk, Esperanto etc. All such languages, though simple, were highly artificial and to learn them was an additional burden. The breath of life did not vitalize them and they could never become the languages of large numbers of people. Basic English, having all their advantages, does not suffer from this disadvantage, as it is a living language. Those who learn Basic English cannot only have a simple and efficient means of communication with others, but they are already on the threshold of Standard English and can proceed further if they so wish.

My enthusiasm for Basic English might lead to the query: Why not have this as an all-India language? No, this cannot be, for the whole genius of this language is alien to our people and we would have to transplant them completely before we can impose this as an all-India language. The practical difficulties would also be far greater than in the case of Hindustani which is already so widely known all over India.

But I think that where we teach English as a foreign tongue, and we shall have to do this on an extensive scale, Basic English should be taught. Only those who wish to make a special study of the language, should proceed to Standard English.

XII

Can we evolve a *Basic Hindustani* after the fashion of Basic English? I think this is easily possible if our scholars will turn their minds to this end. The grammar should be as simple as possible, almost non-existent, and yet it must not do violence to the existing grammar of the language. The essential thing to be borne in mind is that while this Basic language is complete in itself for the expression of all non-technical ideas, it is yet a stepping stone to the further study of the language. The vocabulary might consist of a thousand words or so, not chosen at random because they are common words in the Indian languages, but because they form a complete whole and require no extraneous assistance for all ordinary speaking and writing.

Such a Basic Hindustani should be the all-India language, and with a little effort from the State it will spread with extreme rapidity all over the country and will help in bringing about that national unity which we all desire. It will bring Hindi and Urdu closer together and will also help in developing an all-India linguistic unity. On that solid and common foundation even if variations grow or diversions occur, they will not lead to separatism. Those who wish to add to their knowledge of Hindustani can easily do so, those who are content with knowing Basic Hindustani only can yet take part in the larger life of the nation.

I have said previously that we should not object to the development of Hindi or Urdu separately. The new words that come in from either direction will enrich our inheritance, if they are vital, living words forced on us by circumstances or coming up from the masses. But the formation of artificial words with no real sanction behind them has no such significance. To a lage extent we have to form artificial words to meet the growing needs of our political, economic, scientific and commercial life. In the formation of such words we should try to avoid duplication and separatism. We should be bold enough, I think, to lift bodily foreign technical words which have become current coin in many parts of the world, and to adopt them as Hindustani words. Indeed I should like them to be adopted by all the Indian languages. This will make it easier for our people to read technical and scientific works in various languages, Indian and foreign. Any other course will lead to chaos and confusion in the mind of the student who has to grapple with large numbers of technical terms, and who often has to read important books in other languages. An attempt to have a separate and distinct scientific vocabulary is to isolate and stultify our scientific growth and to put an intolerable burden on the teacher and taught alike. The public life and affairs of the world are already closely knit together and form a single whole. We should make it as easy as possible for our people to understand them and take part in them, and for foreigners to understand our

public affairs.

Many foreign words can and should thus be taken in, but many technical words will have to be taken from our own language also. It is desirable that linguistic and technical experts should make a list of such words for common use. This will not only bring about uniformity and precision, in matters where variety and vagueness are highly undesirable, but will also prevent the use of absurd phrases and expressions. Our journalist friends have a knack of translating literally foreign words and phrases without caring much for the meaning behind them, and then these loose words become current coin and produce confusion of thought. Trade union has been translated sometimes as *vaypar sangh*, a perfectly literal translation and yet as far removed from the truth as anything could be. But the choicest of the translations has been that of 'imperial preference.' This was called by an enterprising journalist *shahi pasand*.

XIII

What should then be the policy of the State in regard to language? The State has to decide this question in regard to its courts and offices, and education.

The official language of each province for affairs of State should be the language of the province. But everywhere Hindustani, as the all-India language, should be officially recognised

and documents in it accepted in both the Devanagari and Urdu scripts. In the Hindustani speaking provinces the two scripts must be officially recognised and it should be open to any person to address a court or an office in either script. The burden of supplying a copy in the other script should not be put upon him. The office or the court may occasionally use either script, but it would be absurd to enforce the rule that everything should be done in both scripts. The script that is mostly used in the area which the court or office serves will become the dominant script of that court or office. But official notifications should be issued in both scripts.

State education must be governed by the rule that it should be given in the language of the student. Thus in each linguistic area the language of that area should be the medium of instruction. But I would go a step further. Wherever there are a sufficient number of people belonging to a linguistic group, even though they might be living in a different linguistic area, they can demand from the State that special provision be made for teaching them in their own language. This would depend of course on such students being easily accessible from a convenient centre, and it would apply to primary education and, perhaps, if the number was large enough, to secondary education. Thus in Calcutta the medium of instruction would be Bengali. But there are large numbers of people there whose mother tongues are Hindustani, Tamil, Telugu, Gujrati etc. Each

of these groups can claim from the State that their primary schools should be run in their own languages. How far it will be possible to extend this to secondary education, I do not quite know. That would depend on the number of pupils concerned and other factors. These pupils would of course have to learn Bengali, the language of the linguistic area they live in, but this is likely to be done in the early secondary stage and after.

In the Hindustani speaking provinces both Devanagari and Urdu scripts will be taught in the schools, the pupils or their parents choosing between them. In the primary stage only one script should be used but the learning of the other script should be encouraged in the secondary stage.

In the non-Hindustani speaking provinces Basic Hindustani should be taught in the secondary stage, the script being left to the choice of the person concerned.

University education should be in the language of the linguistic area, Hindustani (either script) and a foreign language being compulsory subjects. This compulsion need not apply to technical schools and higher technical courses. Provision for teaching foreign languages as well as our classical languages should be made in our secondary schools but the subjects should not be compulsory, except for certain courses, or for preparation for the university stage.

Among the provincial languages I have mentioned Pushtu and Punjabi. I think primary education should be given in these, but how far

higher education can also be given through them is a doubtful matter requiring consideration, as they are not sufficiently advanced. Probably Hindustani will be the best medium for higher education in these areas.

XIV

I have, with great presumption, made various suggestions ranging from primary to university education. It will be easy to criticise what I have written and to point out the difficulties in the way, for I am no expert in education or in languages. But my very inexpertness is perhaps in my favour and I can consider the problem from a layman's point of view and a detached outlook. Also I should like to make it clear that I am not discussing in this essay the important and difficult problem of education as a whole. I am only dealing with the language side of it. When we consider the whole subject of education we have to think in terms of the State and the society we are aiming at; we have to train our people to that end; we have to decide what our citizens should be like and what their occupations should be; we have to fit in this education to their life and occupations; we have to produce harmony and equilibrium in their private and social and public life. We shall have to lay far greater stress on technical and scientific training if we are to take our place in the modern world. All this and more we shall have to do, and in doing so we shall have to upset the

present incompetent and inefficient and top-heavy system of education, and build anew on securer foundations.

But for the moment let us confine ourselves to the question of language and arrive at some general agreement in regard to it. I have written this essay with a view to invite consideration of this problem from a wider angle. If we agree to the general principles I have discussed, the application of them in practice will not be difficult. We are not in a position to apply most of these principles today in spite of so-called provincial autonomy. We have no financial resources and our hands are tied up in a variety of ways. But to the extent we can put our principles into practice we should do so.

It may be that there is general agreement in regard to some of the suggestions I have made, and some disagreement in regard to others. Let us at least know where we agree; the points for discussion and debate will then be limited in number and we can consider them separately.

I might add that my frequent references to linguistic areas and the language of the province, necessitate that provincial units should correspond with such language areas.

XV

To facilitate this consideration I give below some of my main suggestions:

1. Our public work should be carried on

and State education should be given in the language of each linguistic area. This language should be the dominant language in that area. These Indian languages to be recognised officially for this purpose are: Hindustani (both Hindi and Urdu), Bengali, Gujrati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Oriya, Assamese, Sindhi and, to some extent, Pushtu and Punjabi.

2. In the Hindustani speaking area both Hindi and Urdu, with their scripts, should be officially recognised. Public notifications should be issued in both scripts. Either script might be used by a person in addressing a court or a public office, and he should not be called upon to supply a copy in the other script.

3. The medium of State instruction in the Hindustani area being Hindustani, both scripts will be recognised and used. Each pupil or his parents will make a choice of script. Pupils will not be compelled to learn both scripts but may be encouraged to do so in the secondary stage.

4. Hindustani (both scripts) will be recognised as the all-India language. As such it will be open to any person throughout India to address a court or public office in Hindustani (either script) without any obligation to give a copy in another script or language.

5. An attempt should be made to unify the Devanagari, Bengali, Gujrati and Marathi scripts and to produce a composite script suited to printing, typing and the use of modern mechnical devices.

6. The Sindhi script should be absorbed in the Urdu script, which should be simplified, to the extent that is possible, and suited to printing, typing etc.

7. The possibility of approximating the southern scripts to Devanagari should be explored. If that is not considered feasible, then an attempt should be made to have a common script for the southern languages—Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

8. It is not possible for us to think in terms of the Latin script for our languages, for the present at least, in spite of various advantages which that script possesses. We must thus have two scripts: the composite Devanagari—Bengali—Gujrati—Marathi; and the Urdu—Sindhi; and, if necessary, a script for the southern languages, unless this can be approximated to the first.

9. The tendency for Hindi and Urdu in the Hindustani speaking area to diverge and develop separately need not be viewed with alarm, nor should any obstruction be placed in the development of either. This is to some extent natural as new and more abstruse ideas come into the language. The development of either will enrich the language. There is bound to be an adjustment later on as world forces and nationalism press in this direction, and mass education will bring a measure of standardisation and uniformity.

10. We should lay stress on the language (Hindi, Urdu, as well as the other Indian languages) looking to the masses and speaking in terms of

them. Writers should write for the masses in simple language understood by them, and they should deal with problems affecting the masses. Courtly and affected style and flowery phrases should be discouraged and a simple vigorous style developed. Apart from its other advantages, this will also lead to uniformity between Hindi and Urdu.

11. A *Basic Hindustani* should be evolved out of Hindustani on the lines of Basic English. This should be a simple language with very little grammar and a vocabulary of about a thousand words. It must be a complete language, good enough for all ordinary speech and writing, and yet within the framework of Hindustani, and a stepping stone for the further study of that language.

12. Apart from Basic Hindustani, we should fix upon scientific, technical, political and commercial words to be used in Hindustani (both Hindi and Urdu) as well as, if possible, in other Indian languages. Where necessary, these words should be taken from foreign languages and bodily adopted. Lists of other words from our own languages should be made, so that in all technical and such like matters we might have a precise and uniform vocabulary.

13. The policy governing State education should be that education is to be given in the language of the student. In each linguistic area education from the primary to the university stage will be given in the language of the province. Even within a linguistic area, if there are a sufficient

number of students whose mother tongue is some other Indian language, they will be entitled to receive primary education in their mother tongue, provided they are easily accessible from a convenient centre. It may also be possible, if the number is large enough, to give them secondary education also in the mother tongue. But all such students will have to take, as a compulsory subject, the language of the linguistic area they live in.

14. In the non-Hindustani speaking areas, Basic Hindustani should be taught in the secondary stage, the script being left to the choice of the person concerned.

15. The medium of instruction for university education will be the language of the linguistic area. Hindustani (either script) and a foreign language should be compulsory subjects. This compulsion of learning additional languages need not apply to higher technical courses, though a knowledge of languages is desirable even there.

16. Provision for teaching foreign languages, as well as our classical languages, should be made in our secondary schools but the subjects should not be compulsory, except for certain special courses, or for preparation for the university stage.

17. Translations should be made of a considerable number of classical and modern works in foreign literatures into the Indian languages, so that our languages might develop contacts with the cultural, literary and social movements in other countries, and gain strength thereby.

RAJENDRA PRASAD

I would define Hindustani as that language which is understood by all the inhabitants of Northern India, whether they be Hindus or Muslims. It is written in both the scripts, Nagri and Persian. The Congress has recognised it as the national language of India, and attempts are being made to popularise it in those parts of the country where it is not understood. This has given it an added prestige.

What should be the real character of this language? A good deal is being said and written on this question. We can, however, maintain that there are two forms of Hindustani. One, which is called Hindi includes a large number of sanskrit words. The other is called Urdu and is characterised by an abundance of Persian and Arabic words. Although both have the same grammar, yet, when written, they tend to diverge a good deal from each other, and this divergence is steadily increasing. For, Sanskrit words are often used according to the rules of Sanskrit grammar, instead of Hindi grammar, while Arabic or Persian grammar is sometimes employed when using words belonging to those languages. There are some orthodox writers who under the influence of certain prejudices deliberately exclude from

their writings all Persian and Arabic words if they happen to be the devotees of pure Hindi, and all Sanskrit words if they happen to have an excessive fondness for pure Urdu. These writers, as a rule, employ too many Sanskrit, Arabic or Persian words. It is this tendency which is mainly responsible for the ever-widening gap that separates Hindi and Urdu from each other. Hindustani takes the middle course. It neither eschews Sanskrit, nor Arabic and Persian words. It has its own grammar and does not unnecessarily follow the rules of Arabic, Persian or Sanskrit grammars. It not only absorbs the words it borrows from these languages, but also lends these words its own peculiar character and colour.

I think there is only one way of settling the Hindi-Urdu controversy. We should deliberately include in Hindustani all those Persian and Arabic words which are used by good Hindi writers and all those Sanskrit words which are used by good Urdu writers. Besides, the criterion for or the suitability of new words to be taken into Hindustani should not be their derivation from one particular language, but the facility with which they have been or are likely to be accepted by the people. If they can easily get popular currency it would be a mistake to exclude them, for that would be weakening the Hindustani language.

Under the stimulus of new ideas, many new words are being coined these days. The existing stock of Hindi and Urdu words is in several cases, not able to provide us with suitable expressions;

hence new words have to be made from Sanskrit, Arabic or Persian. The major consideration in such cases should be whether or not the new words can be readily understood and used by the people. We may have to employ some English words too. We shall not thereby in any way impoverish our language. But in any case we shall have to abide strictly by our own grammar. Thus we may not render the plural of station as stations but as *stationon* (اسٹیشنوں स्टेशनों) or *stationen* (اسٹیشنیں स्टेशनें). Similarly if *Raidehinda* is used instead of '*Raidenevaala*' its plural should in no case be 'raidehendgan' (رائے دھندگان रायदेहन्दगान) but only 'raidehendon' (رائے دھندوں रायदेहन्दों) or 'raidehende' (رائے دھندے रायदेहन्दे).

I therefore believe that while retaining the purity of our own grammar, we should freely take into Hindustani words from any language provided they have already found popular acceptance or are likely to be easily understood and adopted by the people. If we do so we shall be enriching Hindustani by incorporating in it many words from different languages which will serve as synonyms in the beginning but which, with the growing replenishment of the treasury of words and expressions, will be eventually distinguished from each other by finer shades of thought. It is for this reason that I do not approve of any attempt to discard some words deliberately from our language.

Literary language usually differs a good deal from the spoken language. Therefore, in spite

of having a common grammar, Hindi and Urdu literatures have diverged considerably from each other and are getting further and further away. It is quite obvious that one who has studied Sanskrit or highly Sanskritised Hindi will be inclined to write a language which has a considerable element of Sanskrit in it, even as one who has read more of Persian and Arabic will use a larger stock of words derived from these two languages.

This is a natural tendency which cannot be easily checked. And yet Hindustani, which claims to be the national language, shall have to remain such as may be easily recognised and owned by all and to the development of which everyone may be able to make his contribution.

We do not consider Hindustani to be different from Hindi or Urdu. As I have said above, the real distinguishing feature of a language is its grammar, and the grammatical differences that exist between Hindi and Urdu today are unimportant. Hindi and Urdu differ from each other primarily in respect of vocabulary. If the words used by both become universally accepted and enter into common parlance, not only will the total stock of words be enriched, but it will also be possible to give expression to finer and more delicate shades of meaning. Hindustani, which always strikes the mean, attempts to popularise such words as can easily acquire currency among the people. In fact even in the dialects of the village, there are many words which are so apt and significant that it would be difficult to render them adequately

into Hindi or Urdu. There are several things which are used only in the villages and they have their rustic names which cannot be easily translated. We know that educated people often consider it uncultured or below their dignity to use words and expressions which are popular in the villages, and try to improvise crude and difficult Sanskrit, Arabic or Persian substitutes for them, which are often very unsatisfactory translations lacking in precision of meaning. We shall have to counteract this tendency by including in Hindustani, Hindi or Urdu, a considerable number of apt rustic words and expressions.

If Hindustani instead of remaining the language of a small educated class, is to reach the vast illiterate masses of the villages; if it is to descend from the isolated glory of courts and palaces to the tragic poverty and wretchedness of peasant huts, it shall have to grow and develop by nourishing itself, not on Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic, but on the every day language spoken in the homes of the common people.

I have already observed that Hindustani is now recognised as our national language. India is a big country, with several provinces, each one having its own language. There are, however, a number of provincial languages in which the Sanskrit element predominates. For instance, in Bengali, which is spoken by all the communities inhabiting Bengal, the number of Sanskrit words is definitely larger than those of Arabic or Persian. It is obvious that if in that province Hindustani

is orientated too much in favour of Persian or Arabic, it would not be popularly understood or spoken by the people. On the other hand, Hindustani would be far more easily learnt if a larger number of Sanskrit words were used. Similarly, in the North-Western Frontier Province a Sanskritised Hindustani would not find popular acceptance, while a language having more of Persian or Arabic element would be understood, spoken and learnt with great ease and facility. Thus, there is ample scope for the development of both the forms of Hindustani.

One who seeks to know Hindustani well should take an equal interest in Hindi and Urdu, and should so use Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic words as to make his speech or writing most intelligible to the people whom he is addressing.

To this end, I consider it necessary to prepare a dictionary which gives the meanings of all Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic words that are being used in Hindustani. About two or three thousand such ordinary Hindi and Urdu words as have become popular, and should therefore be known and understood by all, may be selected for purposes of school and college education. Take, for example, two words which are now being very commonly used, कार्य्यकारिणी समिति and مجلس عاملہ. Both mean the same thing, (namely, Executive Committee) but the former is Hindi, while the latter is Urdu. A knowledge of both is, however, necessary. It may be that, in time, a slight shade of meaning may differentiate the two. If that

happens, Hindustani will be all the richer for it and will have two good words for more subtle and precise expression. It is in this manner that we shall be able to reduce the intensity of many of the present controversies and shall proceed to develop Hindustani as a living and powerful common language of our country.

India is like a garden overflowing with plants bearing beautiful flowers. If all the plants grow and blossom without encroaching on each other's nourishment, the garden will rise in splendour. If a few start living at the expense of others, they may themselves blossom more, but they will render many branches barren and ugly. Even so, if we want the garden of our language to flourish and to remain ever green, we shall have to keep bringing into it new plants and new flowers, allowing all of them to grow in beauty side by side. This is the mission of Hindustani. Let us all try to crown it with success.

ABDUL HAQ

The problem of language has not been able to escape the influence of politics which dominates every aspect of our national life today. In fact language has been for a considerable length of time one of the worst victims of political mistrust and dissensions.

The Hindi-Urdu controversy had no existence whatever before the Mutiny. Thus, when in 1837, Persian was replaced by Urdu as the court language, not a single voice was raised in protest. No one asserted the superior claims of Hindi. Urdu was universally accepted primarily because there was no other language which could adequately serve the purpose. After 1857, however, a controversy on the question of language gradually came into existence. With the disappearance of the East India Company and the establishment of the direct rule of the Crown a new consciousness of nationalism was born among a section of the Hindus, who aspired to revive their ancient civilization. It was at that time that Swami Dayanand Saraswati started a vigorous campaign for the propagation of Sanskrit in order to resuscitate Vedic culture. Gurukuls, from where Vedic knowledge and learning was disseminated, were started. These attempts on the part of a section of the Hin-

dus were considerably reinforced by the activities and writings of certain Europeans particularly Prof. Max Muller and Madam Blavatsky, Mrs. Annie Besant and Col. Alcott. It was maintained that nationalism demands a common language, but unfortunately the common language that they sought to develop was a highly Sanskritised Hindi, which could neither be understood in the towns, nor in the villages.

This was the starting point of a separatist movement in the linguistic field. In fact it was the first step in the direction of what is called communalism. This movement took a concrete shape first of all in Bihar; it then spread to the United Provinces where in Allahabad and Benares organisations were set up to popularise and promote Hindi, and eventually a regular campaign was started to oust Urdu from the courts and government offices.

Sir Syed vigorously opposed these undesirable separatist tendencies and wielded his powerful pen in support of Urdu. Once he wrote with great sorrow and disappointment, "For the last thirty years my main concern has been the welfare of the people of the country, whether they be Muslims or Hindus and I have always desired that both these communities should strive together for their common weal. But ever since some of the Hindus have taken it into their head to destroy Urdu and Persian which are the lasting symbols of Muslim rule in India, I have been convinced that now it is not possible for the Hindus and the

Muslims to work together for the progress of the country and the good of the people. I can say it with confidence and from personal experience that to this can be traced the origin of Hindu-Muslim differences."

This state of affairs continued for some time though with diminishing vigour but fresh life was infused into it during Sir Anthony Macdonell's Lieutenant-governorship of the United Provinces. Sir Anthony came out from Bihar and was deeply interested in the Hindi-Urdu controversy. No sooner had he arrived than the votaries of Hindi again raised their standard. This happened during the last days of Sir Syed, but even then he wrote an article, probably his last one, in which he promised all help to an organisation which had been set up at Allahabad for the promotion of Urdu. Unfortunately he died soon after. This left the field free for the supporters of Hindi, who consolidated their position and succeeded in introducing Hindi in courts and government offices.

This was followed by a period in which the mantle of Sir Syed fell upon Nawab Mohsanul-Mulk who set about to advance the cause of Urdu. A big meeting was called at Lucknow where the Nawab Sahib spoke with great vigour and zeal, but Sir Anthony was bent upon the due observance of his ukase. He tried to intimidate the Nawab Sahib and even held out the threat that unless he dissociated himself from the pro-Urdu agitation, he would be removed from the secretaryship of the M.A.O. college. Being anxious not

to harm the college in any way, the Nawab Sahib yielded to the threat and withdrew himself from the movement. If the Nawab Sahib had resigned his secretaryship and devoted himself entirely to the cause of Urdu, it is possible that Urdu would never have fallen upon these dark days.

Hindi propaganda thereafter languished for some time, due to the paucity of any substantial literature in that language. The Hindi of those days consisted of a few ordinary books, and some short stories, most of which were transliterations from Urdu in the Nagri script. But when Pandit Malaviya started his *Shuddhi* and *Sangathan* movement Hindi was thrown in as a part of an all comprehensive programme of Hindi revival. And in the wake of religious fervour Hindi made striding progress. It now ceased to constitute purely a literary problem but acquired a religious and political character. It admits of no doubt that the efforts of Malaviyaji and his followers bore fruit and with their constant use of Hindi in speech and writing, Hindi literature and language registered a substantial advance. But the Hindi movement received the greatest accession of strength when Gandhiji accepted the presidentship of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and took upon himself to make Hindi the national language of India. This caused the whole country to seethe with pro-Hindi propaganda. And even in such provinces as the Frontier, Madras and the Punjab whose languages have no affinity with Hindi, Hindi progressed apace. The Hindus of those provinces began to

demand the teaching of Hindi from their governments, a demand which was wholly unjustified in view of the fact that Hindi is not and has never been their language. Indeed, in this enthusiasm even the Resolution of the Congress was shelved. Lakhs of rupees were spent on this new campaign. It is really surprising that while on the one hand it is claimed that the creation of one nation with a common language is our goal, on the other, Urdu, the only language which is really common, having been born of the joint efforts of the Hindus and the Muslims is being deliberately discarded.

Of all the numerous languages spoken in India, Urdu is unique. In the first place it is not limited by any narrow boundaries of territory, caste or creed. In practically all parts of the country it is understood and in several provinces it is the general medium of speech and writing. Therefore as compared to other language it is far better qualified to be recognised as the common language. Indeed, Urdu is the concrete expression of that culture which was born of the common life of the Hindus and the Muslims. It belongs to this very country and represents a glorious synthesis of the Hindu and Muslim cultures. Consequently both the communities have equal claims upon it.

It is an error to suppose that the Muslims rulers tried to sponsor this language in the country; indeed it would appear that they hardly paid any attention to it, and even the learned and distinguished men of those times looked with con-

tempt on this hybrid language. The genesis of Urdu is not to be sought in the whimsical fancies of a despot, nor in the clever subtleties of learned divines, or the spiritual grace of a mufti or a mahatma; nor has it evolved out of resolutions of congresses and conferences. Its roots are, on the other hand, deep down in the soil and it is nourished on the vitalising principle of the common needs of everyday life of the people. The boons conferred by this language upon India are incalculable, for it has united peoples otherwise widely divergent and has given a common and unifying tone to the entire life of the country. In the words of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, it is the joint property of the people incapable of partition.

In the growth and development of Urdu the Hindus have played a very considerable part; indeed, it can be said that their contribution has been greater than that of the Muslims. Even the responsibility for the surplusage of Arabic and Persian words and devices in the language can be laid at the door of the Hindus, for things would not have come to this pass if the Hindus as a body had not boycotted this language. Their association with it would have certainly acted as a restraining influence and the same balance as existed before would have been maintained.

The Hindi-Urdu controversy is getting more and more acute everyday. Our complaint that Sanskrit words are being increasingly introduced in the language is usually answered by the retort that we are as guilty of using more of Persian and

Arabic words. But while it has never been our intention to overload Urdu with Arabic and Persian words, it has been the avowed policy of Gandhiji, Babu Rajendra Prasad, Kaka Kalelkar and their followers to make increasing use of Sanskrit words on the ground that the language would thereby be easily understood by the people of Southern India, whose mother tongues have a sanskritic complexion. We must, however, remember that, in the first instance, it is not true that in the ordinary speech of the South Indians, Sanskrit predominates and, secondly, the South Indians, have objected to the Hindi propaganda precisely because they consider it an insidious attempt to undermine their distinctive culture. This opposition of the South Indians is not unreasonable, for their objections to Hindi seem to be based on grounds similar to our own.

Our objection is not only directed against the introduction of strange and incongruous Sanskrit words into the language; but also against the fact that many words, which have been in use for centuries, are being discarded and replaced by new and hitherto unknown words of sanskrit origin. Worst of all, even ordinary Hindi words of common currency are being given up in preference to difficult, queer and newly coined words. The fact, however, is that once a word comes into common use, it loses its alien character and to cast it out from the language as a foreigner would be as unjustifiable as the expulsion of the Jews from Germany by Hitler.

It is said that the times are rapidly changing and new ideas are gathering force everyday; hence, the use of new words is unavoidable. We admit that in a living language there is a constant infiltration of new words, but this should not result in a wholesale adoption of all the outlandish, unfamiliar, crude and difficult words found in dictionaries. Every language has a poise and character of its own and only that word is commonly acceptable which has passed through its assimilative process.

One often hears these days that, but for the difference in their scripts, Hindi and Urdu are the same language. Strange enough, this view is held by many scholars and other people of consequence. Considering the present state of affairs, however, I disagree with this opinion, which to my mind is dictated either by political expediency or ignorance. Thus, for example a Hindi knowing person would hardly follow an Urdu newspaper or journal and a Urdu knowing person would suffer from a similar disability when confronted with a Hindi paper or journal. Time was when these two languages could have been united but now their paths are diverging ever apart and it seems impossible to bring them back together. In order to bridge this gulf a suggestion is made that the Hindi writers should abstain from the use of highly Sanskritised words and the Urdu writers from difficult Arabic and Persian words. But there are obvious difficulties in putting this suggestion into practice. When the suggestion is not followed even by

those who advocate it others can hardly be expected to take it seriously. In justice, however, no blame should be assigned for this either to the Hindi or the Urdu writers. Western education and the ever-changing modern conditions are generating currents of new ideas which seek to find expression, and perforce the Hindi writer has to fall back upon the resources of Sanskrit and the Urdu writer on those of Arabic and Persian. They could have been blamed if they had failed to make use of any existing suitable medium of expression devised for them. The so called "Hindustani" of which one hears so much in political writing and discussion these days, is only useful for conversational and ordinary business needs. For purposes of art, literature, and science it is incapable of being used both by the Hindi and Urdu writers. Our ordinary everyday speech cannot become the language of literature and learning. The fact of the matter is that so far the problem has not been considered from this angle, and consequently no organised and united attempt has been made to make Hindustani an adequate vehicle for expressing literary and scientific ideas.

In my opinion there is a method of tackling this problem which I am trying to put into practice. A common dictionary may be compiled which would contain all the Persian, Arabic and Urdu words which have passed into Hindi speech and literature, and all the Sanskrit and Hindi words which Urdu has adopted. This dictionary may be placed before a representative body of Hindi

and Urdu writers, after whose approval it may be published as a basis for the further development of a common language. And this body or a committee nominated by it may be made responsible for adding to it from time to time such Hindi and Urdu words and expressions as are deemed necessary for the growth of the language and for introducing new ideas. Suitable publicity may be given to the results of these efforts.

It may however be objected that no language has ever been created on these lines, but that in itself is no argument against an attempt of this nature, particularly when we take into account the peculiar character of the language problem of our country.

The present is an age of new ventures and discoveries and we would be justified in resorting to bold experiments. It is possible that in this manner we may succeed in creating a group of writers determined to popularise a common language through the driving force of their literary effort. Although poets and writers can never be made to write to order yet this scheme, if successful, may in some measure afford guidance to our literary men. It might at least help to mitigate the ever increasing divergence between the two languages. The publication of a few newspapers and periodicals in this common language may go a long way towards popularising it.

In case it is not possible to do something of this nature, then Hindi and Urdu may be left to their own devices. In the nature of things there

should be no room for opposition and rivalry between them, for they are nearer to each other than any other two languages of the country. It may be borne in mind that no writer of Urdu can attain excellence unless he is conversant with Hindi, even as a knowledge of Urdu is essential for a good Hindi writer. The common ties of Hindi and Urdu are so close that their mutual opposition will prove harmful to both.

The question of script will also be easily solved once we have successfully put into practice the suggestions made above. The problem of script is not related to Hindi and Urdu alone, but concerns all the other languages of the country as well. The solution of this problem by the introduction of a common script, even if it be Roman, would at once remove the initial and unfortunately the ever persisting obstacle in the way of our learning the different languages of the country. The study of another language enriches our own, and indeed widens our sympathies and our understanding of others. A time is bound to come when the problem of language will not be so difficult of solution as it appears today.

PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

I believe that political freedom cannot come out of cultural slavery to the English language and things English. I have therefore always stood strongly both in the Congress and outside it for the exclusion of English from our national and inter-provincial work. India's real self must assert itself through her own languages and particularly through the language which is understood by about 25 crores of her population and which is called Hindi, Hindustani or Urdu by various sets of people. Personally I prefer the name 'Hindi' because its associations are old and pleasing and it stands for a synthesis of Hindu and Muslim cultures. 'Hindi' from 'Hind'—the name of our country—has always seemed to me to be an easily understood term. This covers several forms and dialects of that language. Urdu is only a particular form of it. The word Hindi has come down to us from Amir Khusroo. Some writers think that the word 'Hindi' was for the first time used by Khusroo for this language. And a galaxy of Muslim writers after Khusroo have used this word not only for the old indigenous form of the language but also for the Persianized form of it. Baqor Agha of Ellore (Deccan) who was born in 1157 Hijri gave the name 'Diwan-i-Hindi'

to the collections of his poems written in a language which would be generally called Urdu today. The well-known poet *Mir of Dehli* used the expression 'Hindi' for the language which he employed for his poems. Hindi, like Hind derived from old 'Sindh', does not belong to any community or religion. The association which the word has behind it—of great literary achievements of the Muslims as well as the Hindus—is to my mind a common national asset. Khusroo, Kabir, Malik Muhammad Jaisi, Rahim Khan Khankhana, Anis, Raskhan—Muslims, who wrote in the old indigenous forms—are surely entitled to as much respect as Ghalib or Zauq or Atash. The present day tendency amongst the Muslims to keep away from Kabir and Jaisi and Rahim is fundamentally due to the same reason which keeps them away from the Congress. A true patriot will look upon these great Muslim writers and upon great Hindu writers like Tulsidas and Surdas with genuine pride and love. It is cultural development of this kind that I look forward to. And I am clear that this will come about with common, social and political endeavour.

Regarding the form of the language or the character in which it should be written, these are questions on which theorists may quarrel but those who are in active work and desire to approach the masses of the whole country will, of necessity, solve them in the most natural way. I would say, 'Use the language and the script which is intelligible to the people whom you are addres-

sing'. Obviously today Nagari script is understood by a much larger number of the people of India than any other script. The Muslims of Bengal usually write in the Bengali script, those of Madras write in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam or Kannari and those of Gujrat in the Gujrati script. Nagari is the common basis of most of these scripts. If it is used for national purposes that will obviously not be a cause of alarm to the Muslims of the above-named provinces, since they are already using a form of it. For the North India Muslims, the Persian script has a special importance and I say it should be retained for them side by side with Nagari. What I wish to emphasise is that the question of alphabet and script should be looked at from the national point of view. It has nothing to do with any religious dogma or creed. Personally I have for some years advocated the simplification of Persian characters for writing our language. The Nagari characters have the advantage of being phonetic. One can learn to write correctly in Nagari in a much shorter time than in Persian script. Even then the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan is engaged in further simplifying the Nagari characters by changing the shapes of some letters. Could something like that not be done by Urdu scholars? Superfluous letters for the same sound should to my mind be weeded out. If Urdu writers take a long view of things and give a lead, Urdu will become easy to learn and much of the present controversy between Hindi and Urdu scripts will lose its sting.

These questions do not baffle me. I look upon them from a rational standpoint. There is nothing which I would not change if I am convinced that the change stands for human progress, which in our terms today, means national progress. Even good customs and ideas, which had their use but which have become unsuitable with the change of conditions, must make room for other ways and ideas, lest their continuance should "corrupt the world." At the same time I am convinced that no individual or nation can entirely run away from the past. The past holds us by the hand and leads us to the future. These two apparently antagonistic principles working together must evolve our future also. I visualise this future as a complete synthesis not only of Hindi and Urdu questions but also of Hindu and Muslim cultures. The points of cultural contact between Hindus and Muslims today are ever so much larger than the points of difference, and a progressive and national outlook can make a beautiful blend, which will be the envy of other countries and a solid factor in the future making of the world.

ZAKIR HUSAIN

Our discussions regarding Hindustani remind me forcibly of one of Molier's characters—M. Jourdain. This gentleman who was feverishly anxious to learn everything a gentleman ought to know, was simply amazed when his teacher told him that what he spoke was prose. It was impossible that he should have been talking prose for forty years without knowing it. He had to convince himself by asking again and again: "Is all this that I say—"Put my slippers here", "Give me my night-shirt"—is all this prose?" There was nothing that could be done about it. It was indeed prose.

There are countrymen of ours to whom Hindustani is what prose was to M. Jourdain. They try to unravel this mystery of Urdu, Hindi and Hindustani and set about it in such wise that even the most elementary facts begin to confound them with their complexity. I fear that if I give a simple direct answer to this question of Urdu, Hindi and Hindustani there will be many who will be taken aback—like M. Jourdain. But I have no choice. The answer really is simple and straightforward. Hindustani is that language which millions upon millions of our countrymen, Hindus and Muslims, speak and understand. It is the

language in common use in Northern India. All over the rest of the country you will find plenty of people who know it. Many who do not speak it themselves, understand it. In the cities it is even more current. You will find in any large city many who speak it, many more who understand it.

But people like M. Jourdain will object that the language I refer to is not Hindustani, it is Urdu. They are right. Hindustani is also Urdu. It is the hall-mark of Hindustani that neither those who speak Urdu nor those who speak Hindi should be able to find fault with it. We all know what position Maulvi Abdul Haq Saheb holds as a connoisseur of language. He has, just by the way given a fine description of Hindustani in his introduction to Inshaallah Khan's 'Rani Ketki'. "It is understood by the Urdu speaking as well as by the Hindi speaking; it is current; it is clear; this is called Hindustani."

But it might be urged that Inshaallah Khan in his 'Rani Ketki' has not used a single word of Arabic or Persian extraction, while those who claim to speak Hindustani use such words by the score. This also is true. We use such words because they are Hindustani; Hindustani contains any number of Arabic and Persian words. It also contains Turkish words, Portuguese words, English words. It has borrowed from I do not know how many different languages. There are pandits who specialise in the genealogies of words, I will not deny them the right to trace the origin

of any word to a particular country or to a particular people. What matters to me, and to hundreds of millions like me, is that the words belong to my language; that I use them automatically and naturally; that I use them all the time.

There are those, I know, who do not relish such a haphazard mixture of viands. 'This is neither here nor there', they will say, 'neither fish nor fowl. Our language should be our own, pure and unmixed'. I think it is just this craze for purification that has set Urdu and Hindi against each other. For there was a time, not long ago, when people did not know one from the other. Standard Urdu writers have even called their language Hindi. It was only when people began to forswear the use of Arabic and Persian words and coined Sanskrit equivalents, that the common language was rent in twain, some writing pure Hindi, others loading their expression with incongruous Arabic and Persian expressions. But those who speak Urdu, cannot, even in spite, exceed certain bounds. They cannot, in a quarrel that has just started the other day, destroy the work of centuries. The framework of their language is Hindustani, its grammar is Hindustani; and they have never affected to loathe words because they were outlandish or infidel. Still, in retaliation or perhaps with some other motive, they try to make their language a mosaic of ill-assorted Arabic and Persian words. If we tried to write the language of everyday speech, our literary medium would be lucid and simple, living

and effective, sincere and appealing. Words in common use should not be discarded, obviously incongruous words should not be thrust in. Then we would have Hindustani.

But why this attempt to purify the language which has raised this quarrel between Hindi and Urdu? We must give due consideration to the motives behind the attempt and expose any error we may discover in it. Perhaps it originates in the desire that is felt, when a people become conscious of themselves, to call their own only those things which are exclusively their own and exclude everything that is foreign. Some foreign elements in their life have caused them grief, and so they come to regard all things that have some foreign element with the same repulsion. In their impatience they forget that some foreign things have become native while others have remained foreign, some have imprisoned our life within narrow walls, others have redoubled the urge for freedom. It is not ill winds only that blow in from outside: there are those also that scatter fertility and flowers. It is suicidal ignorance not to distinguish one from the other.

Those who would pick out and discard foreign words from Hindustani have, I think, fallen into this error. They have mistaken winds that brought fertility and flowers into our country and scattered a fragrance that still dwells in our life for blasts that wither and scorch. To put it quite plainly, those who wish to exclude Arabic and Persian words from Hindustani believe that the

things created by centuries of co-operation between Hindus and Muslims are impure and this impurity must at all costs be removed. But they seem to be unaware that this foreign element has become a part of our national organism. To remove it they will not only have to exclude Arabic and Persian words from Urdu; they will also have to purify the language of Tulsidas, Surdas and Kabirdas, an adventure as mad as the attempt to force the Ganges and the Jumna not to flow into each other but follow their own separate ways to the sea.

And if we admit the validity of excluding foreign elements in principle, why should we stop at language? Why should not each one of our different linguistic and racial groups have its own pure Swadeshi culture, its separate country, its independent government? Our history will then have completed a silly circle and we shall be where we began. It may be that some devotees of logic and purity desire this and will achieve it. There is such a thing as cutting the nose to spite the face; some madmen even cut their throats. But any Indian who has the least confidence in the sanity of his countrymen will find it difficult to believe that they can be all afflicted with such sheer lunacy.

Apart from attempting to exclude foreign words, there is another mistake we are making. There are people who wish to restore to their original form words that we have taken from other languages and have adapted, alike in meaning and in pronunciation, to suit our own purposes.

This is again, as we say in Hindustani, an attempt to pull the eyes out of their sockets and paste them on the neck. It also is a fad of those who con their books far away from the bustle of life and the living speech. Such people forget that, like precious stones which are cut and set before we can call them jewels and use them as ornaments, words are chiselled and grounded and rolled till the tongue gives them a particular form and the mind assigns to them a particular meaning. This process, which it takes centuries to complete, cannot be reversed or ignored merely to satisfy the vanity or the pedantry of a few learned people. Words that have become part of our Hindustani language are Hindustani words and they have no form and no meaning other than what we give them. Their origin may interest the philologist. Our chief interest is the language we speak and understand.

So much for words that have found their way into Hindustani and achieved general currency as Hindustani words. We must now consider whether this language whose purity and genuineness I have tried to vindicate, is self-sufficient or dependent on support from outside, whether it can serve all our purposes or is suited only for the most ordinary daily needs and insubstantial tales. Every day of our life finds the world farther advanced, with new inventions and manufactures, new conditions and ideas, and our language must keep pace with life. Should we make up our mind to let our vocabulary remain as it is and twist and turn

our expressions to meet new situations, or should we coin or borrow words. I do not think anyone has the right to stop the growth of a language. We must have new words for new ideas, new names for new things. Where should they come from? It seems to me that with the new words as with the old, it is not the derivation that matters. These new words must not be incongruous, unassimilable; that is all. We must look for them, in the first place, in the speech of the villagers. They are closer to nature; they let themselves be carried forward by the vast stream of life and do not sit on the bank, wrapt in self-conscious contemplation. I believe this search will yield a great deal. Then we must consider the terms our craftsmen and workers have invented. I shall not be surprised if we discover that among them names and terms for which we consult ponderous Arabic and Sanskrit dictionaries have been in use, we cannot say how long, and are remarkably apt. When we have exhausted both these sources, and when they fail to provide us with what we happen to require, we should accept foreign terms or names. If there is difficulty in pronunciation, we should not hesitate to make changes that will render them easier to pronounce. And when once we have adopted a term we should regard it as our own, apply to it rules which we apply to other nouns, make it indistinguishable from words of incontestable 'Hindustani' derivation, and consider it of no consequence whether a word is a recent acquisition or of long-established currency. Our scien-

tific terms we shall have to take over in large numbers from foreign languages, and it will be a great advantage if Urdu and Hindi speakers agree upon adopting the same terms, otherwise the scientific literature of the one will be of little use to the other. We shall have still to borrow many words from both Arabic and Sanskrit, and here again our only criterion should be that the terms selected are appropriate, easy to pronounce and as akin as possible to the spirit of our language. Purity or sanctity should be no consideration at all. This has been our principle from the very beginning, this is the rule we should now observe. For this is the Hindustani way.

If Urdu and Hindi speakers collaborate in the selection and adoption of new terms, if our textbooks are written in the same tongue, if newspapers do not avoid the spoken language, if the Radio stations of Northern India and our theatres and cinemas decide to give currency to a common language which is not burdened with harsh and ponderous Arabic and Sanskrit words, then the movement for splitting up Hindustani into two divergent languages will lose its force. We shall at least have a common language for ordinary conversation, for business and for instruction in schools. It may be that for a time the social sciences will have two media, and inspiration will come to our poets in Urdu or Hindi. But I do not believe that even arts, literature and poetry will be able to resist the tendency to speak a common language which will be Hindustani. Litera-

ture cannot for long remain the interest and preoccupation of an elite. Language, whatever else it may be, is above all a social phenomenon. It links man to man, heart to heart. The individual by himself has no language. Therefore, as in course of time writers feel the need to communicate with a larger circle of readers, and as larger numbers begin to feel the need to understand and think, our literature will come closer to life and our language will become clearer and simpler. Even our writers, who today affect a detachment from the world and talk in their parables to God knows whom, are after all human beings, not frogs at the bottom of a well who croak to themselves and go to sleep. They seek, after all, communion with their fellow-beings, and they will feel compelled to simplify their language and expression, to talk so that they are understood. Students of languages know that as a speech gains wider currency, those who hear and read begin to exercise a greater influence upon it than those who speak and write. And it is proper that it should be so. Language is the handmaid of society; it cannot turn its face away from the people it serves. Language is a form of self-expression without communion. Of course, there is in poetry an element that is purely personal and self-centred, a kind of spiritual relief the poet seeks, sometimes in a sigh, sometimes in a cry of joy. But even in such a situation the poet desires to be heard and understood. A bird will now and then be found sitting on a mouldering stump in a barren

wilderness and singing to itself, but it is in green woods and gardens mainly that songsters unburden themselves of their songs. That is why I believe that our poets and writers will soon take to writing in Hindustani, the clear and simple language of everyday use, the language from which old words will not be banished because they are foreign and to which new words will be continuously added, but its vocabulary will not be burdened with heavy Arabic and Sanskrit words just because they are Arabic or Sanskrit. This language will be the emblem of a common life, a tribute to our achievements of the past and a promise of endeavour and fulfilment in the future.

KAKA KALELKAR

The more I think of it the more am I led to believe that only those whose mother tongue is neither Hindi nor Urdu will perhaps be able to decide what form the National Language should take.

The problem of creating a national language arises out of our National History and is entirely the result of the desire to create national solidarity.

Try as we may to isolate this question of National Language, we cannot overlook its connection with religion, culture, and politics. A few Hindus and Muslims keep on repeating that Urdu is, in no way, the monopoly of the Muslims; nor should it be called the religious language of the Muslims. But the generality of the Muslims do believe Urdu to be the vehicle of Islamic culture, and see the safety of Islam in the protection of Urdu.

Sanskrit is frankly, the religious language of the Hindus, and may be regarded as the mother of all the languages of Hindustan. We must not forget that Sanskrit is the symbol *par excellence* of the unity of India.

There is, no doubt, a vast body of literature in Sanskrit which has nothing to do with religion, and which people of all religions can freely enjoy—

even those who are against Hinduism or have a positive dislike for it.

A Muslim friend once said that it was perhaps difficult to find in other languages the same amount of *Kufr* as is found in Urdu literature. Language is an independent stream in itself, unconstrained by the artificial dams of creed or religion.

The English, though Christians, do not hesitate to make an assiduous study of Greek and Latin literatures, nor do they consider the reading of Greek and Latin literature as dangerous to the existence of Christianity. This, indeed, should be the attitude of the Muslims towards the Sanskrit language and literature. Is it not the language of the forefathers of the Hindus, Mussalmans and the Christians of India?

The English have allowed their language to be deeply influenced by Greek and Latin, and, if anything, they have gained thereby, and Christian thought is the richer for this study.

The languages of Hindustan have been fostered and have developed in the cultural atmosphere created by Sanskrit. They are the soul-daughters of Sanskrit. Urdu, though belonging to the same family has, perhaps on account of the nature of its limited script, receded further and further away from Sanskrit with the result that it has been cut off from all the other Indian languages as well. The Muslims have gained nothing by this state of affairs. Let them, by all means, cling firmly to their religious beliefs and traditions but let them not, if they would avoid grave loss

to themselves, barricade themselves against the literatures of all the languages of Hindustan. If Urdu refuses to have any truck even with words that have become common to all the Indian languages, then Urdu will suffer, and the Mussalmans although living in this country, will feel like foreigners and in a way cease to be of it.

Today this might not perhaps trouble them appreciably. Nevertheless, when better days come upon us both, they may have to suffer keen regret for their lack of foresight.

As the English study today the Indian philosophy and allow it not only to affect their language but even to influence the evolution of their ideas, so should the Hindus study Arabic and Persian literature and allow it to influence the indigenous languages. We must not forget that Persian is own sister to Sanskrit. It is a beautifully polished language, famous for its grace and charm, and its literature is second to none in fineness and subtlety. The Hindus should therefore make it a point to study Persian well, and cherish with care and affection such of its lovely and expressive words as have managed to make a home for themselves in Indian languages. I go even further and say that, whenever need arises, we should not hesitate to take good new words from Persian and incorporate them in our language, thus making impartial use of both Sanskrit and Persian words.

As long as the generality of our people remain backward, and as long as we remain indifferent to their lack of culture and education, so long will

they find even the commonest Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian words difficult to understand and manipulate. As long as this state of affairs continues, we shall have to make Hindustani as easy and simple as possible, keeping it free from all difficult Arabic and Persian words, and also from such Sanskrit words as have not come into common use in the various provincial languages.

Unfortunate as it is, the fact remains that there are today any number of English words which are quite familiar to the Hindus and the Mussalmans alike, and for which it is not easy to find either Hindi or Urdu substitutes. However, sincerely as we might deplore this, it is obvious that in these circumstances we shall be compelled to incorporate such English words in our Hindustani. Since the Mussalmans, as it were, have taken a vow to tolerate only such indigenous words as they already know, and to sternly boycott any new Indian word whatsoever, using, when necessary, either words adapted from Arabic or Persian or from English, it is inevitable that the number of English words in our language should go on increasing; all the more so as the pro-Hindi section has also now begun to observe this law of untouchability with regard to Arabic and Persian words. They will, per force retain such Arabic and Persian words as have become firmly rooted in their tongues and language and refuse to be ejected, though it will be their constant effort to remove them as soon as possible. It is fortunate that the capacity for action of such people by no

means equals their bigotry, so that there is still great hope of a healthy and friendly give and take between the two languages. A strong will to unite is an indispensable adjunct to the establishment of any unity that is to be real and lasting. When, however, the tendency to mutual suspicion grows unchecked day by day, and 'the will *not* to unite' goes on strengthening accordingly, neither Urdu nor Hindi can make any progress and any effort to amalgamate the two into a common language, Hindustani, will only become a fresh cause of disharmony and disunion.

Be that as it may, Hindustani can only be born of a union between Hindi and Urdu. To begin with, we shall give the name Hindustani to both easy Urdu and easy Hindi, creating, at the same time, a new style through a judicious mixture of the two, on the lines of the spoken language of the North. For this we shall be virulently blamed by all those who are strongly pro-Hindi or pro-Urdu. Nevertheless it is that style alone which will become popular and later on develop into the real National Language. To this end we shall work and strive gladly paying whatever price might be demanded of us, and it is this National Language which we shall introduce in all the provinces.

We are aware that we shall have to face and overcome many difficulties in order to achieve our end. It may be that we shall have to expend all our energies on this effort alone. But we must remember that this is not our final goal. Once

education spreads amongst the people and they attain the privileges and responsibilities of self-government, once the people become cultured and conscious enough to recognise their own rights and true interests, then we shall not fear to use the most difficult of Sanskrit words, nor hesitate to introduce the most difficult of Arabic and Persian words into our *Kaumi Zuban*. The word-treasury of a language grows with its own development. When it attains the power of expressing the subtlest feelings and ideas we shall use all the apt, beautiful and charming words which Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian can supply us, with ease and effectiveness.

Let these words of mine not startle our readers. The language of the Pandit and the Maulavi is rapidly becoming unacceptable to the public. These are the days of democracy. Authors no longer write to flatter kings, or to show off their learning. Today it is "Their Majesties the Masses" whom the writers wish to please, if they wish to please at all, and whose approval they strive to gain. As the public becomes more and more cultured, the writers, poets and speakers will become more and more the servants of the public. The result will be a language at once simple, rich, refined and dignified. The Hindustani language will then lack neither words nor culture; and words from Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Pali, Magadhi, Bengali, Marathi, Gujrati and all other provincial languages will be given a hearty welcome and an honourable place in its cosmopolitan *Durbar*. Every-

body will become familiarized with all the indigenous words. The spirit of our Congress, which welcomes everyone with equal affection whether they be Sunni or Shia, Brahmin or Non-Brahmin, Dravida or Gond, regarding all alike as Indians pure and simple, will then inform our rich and powerful Hindustani so that none will ask, "Whence has this word come?" But all will accept as Hindustani all words which ride on the tongues and reign in the hearts of the Indian people. Let alone Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian words even such words from the Kannad, Telugu, Malayalam and Tamil as are common to all those languages and fit to be circulated throughout India will enter the sacred precincts of Hindustani without let or hindrance and make themselves so beloved there that none will have the heart to eject them.

But these are dreams to be realized in the future. Today our Hindustani will be composed of all the generally understood words from Hindi and Urdu, and, from amongst these also, those will be preferred which are most commonly understood in the Punjab, Rajasthan, Behar, Bundelkhand, Bengal, Gujrat, Maharashtra, Karnatak and so on. Thus, for instance, the word 'zameen' will be more popular than the word 'Bhumi' and the word 'karan' will be more generally used than the word 'wajah'. But both will be considered correct.

The National Language belongs to the whole nation; it is literally "Sabki Boli", "everybody's language;" it will be moulded by public opinion

and will adapt itself to public needs and convenience. It will contain the word "neer" as well as the words "pani" and "jal", because twelve crores of Southern Indians recognize only the word "neer" for "water".

The grains and spices for the National Language will be prepared and supplied by the North Indians—Hindus and Mussalmans, but it is we who will mix the stuff and cook the dish, we, of the West, South, and the East—we, whose hearts reck naught of old quarrels or new bigotries, we who would live in the present without becoming oblivious of the past and who are bent upon creating of ourselves a radiant future.

SULAIMAN NADVI

The language which is most widely spoken in India today, call it Urdu or Hindustani, has not been imported from Arabia, Persia or Turkey but has originated in this very country. It is, however, true that the Muslims have introduced in it a number of words and expressions belonging to the languages of Islamic countries, but this was inevitable under the circumstances. Indeed a language only reflects the needs and requirements of those who use it.

This language, which is spoken by the Hindus and the Muslims alike, has taken about a thousand years to grow to its full maturity. It is in fact the product of centuries of joint effort of the Hindus and the Muslims to evolve a common medium of expression, and it may be considered as one of the most valuable momentos of Hindu-Muslim unity. Those who seek to destroy it are fomenting a new communal differences, for they are trying to create in the country, indeed in every village and hamlet, two separate nations, mutually suspicious or hostile, because they cannot understand each other owing to the lack of a common language.

A section of our Hindu brethren, who think that nationalism demands that everything foreign should be discarded, oppose this language on the

ground that it is alien in character. They want to develop a pure Indian language to the exclusion of all those foreign words which have gradually crept into our speech and writing. It is, however, obvious that just as the adoption of a few English words has not made our language English, similarly the inclusion of a few Arabic or Persian words and expressions cannot be said to have changed the essential character of our language.

The choice lies between two alternatives. One, that India should become a land of the Hindus alone, with her language, art and culture, purely Hindu in character, dominating the lives of all those who dwell within its boundaries. This is an extremely dangerous course, bristling with difficulties, and its success is highly doubtful.

The other alternative would be to look at India as a bouquet of many flowers, each having its own hue and fragrance, yet all bound together by the common tie of patriotism. This alone would enable every community to live and thrive and to make its due contribution to the strength and prosperity of the entire nation.

To my mind, that limited conception of nationalism, held by a section of the Hindus, which goes to the extent of considering many inhabitants of this and as foreigners, is born of the same traditional narrow mindedness which confined the Hindus within the bounds of the Himalayas and the Indian Ocean, and which was responsible for perpetuating the evil of untouchability through centuries.

To consider this language which is spoken and understood today in the greater part of the country as an Islamic language is a mistake. Attempts are being made to conceal the fact that it has been developed by the common labour of the Hindus and the Muslims. But the futility of such attempts was demonstrated at the occasion of the All-India Urdu day, last year when the Hindus, throughout the country, took a keen interest in the celebrations along with the Muslims and thus gave ample proof of the fact that this language is the language of the country as a whole. Many Hindus with insight do not hesitate to vouch for the fact that this is their own language.

Even if it is granted that Urdu is the mother tongue of the Muslims alone, no one can maintain that its development can ever constitute a menace to the traditions and culture of the majority community. The latter is bound to assert itself owing to its numerical superiority. But the minority will suffer cultural extinction if it adopts the language which is now being deliberately created for the majority.

A Hindu professor from the Punjab has very aptly stated that Urdu is the mother tongue of the people precisely in those parts of the country where the Hindus predominate, that is, the region extending from Ambala to Bhagalpur, while it is not popularly spoken in those provinces where the Muslims are in a majority, that is, in Kashmir, the North-Western Frontier Province, Sind, Punjab and Bengal. Therefore perhaps Urdu can be

more appropriately called the language of the Hindus than of the Muslims. Yet the Muslims have not only adopted it, but have also, in the interest of cultural unity, advanced its claims to be recognised as the national language. There is no reason why they should leave it now for any other language.

It is desirable to correct here that much-repeated proposition that the Hindus and the Muslims speak identically the same language in those parts of the country which have their distinct regional languages. It is said, for example, that in Bengal the common language of all the communities is Bengali, as in Gujrat it is Gujrati, in Maharashtra Marathi and in Madras Kanerese and Telugu. This is partly right and partly wrong. It is right in the sense that the Hindus and the Muslims in these parts use the same verbs and prepositions but in respect of nouns there is a good deal of difference between their respective forms of expression, corresponding to their different cultural and social traditions. I have it on the authority of a Muslim professor from Bengal that water will be called 'pani' by a Bengali Muslim and "jal" by a Bengali Hindu, and that a Muslim will call a mother's sister 'Khala' and a Hindu 'Mosi'. I can speak with personal knowledge of Marathi and Gujrati. The Gujrati of the Parsis, the Muslims, and the Hindus are quite distinct from each other, just as Muslim Marathi can be easily distinguished from Hindu Marathi. To my mind the difference between Hindi and Urdu

should not be greater than that which is found in the Hindu and Muslim forms of the above mentioned languages. But if it is insisted that Sanskritised Hindi is the real language of the country, communal dissensions will grow and destroy the unity of the nation.

There is only one solution for the problem of language and that is, to accept, Hindustani or Urdu, or call it simple Hindi as the national language. Pure Sanskritised Hindi or Sanskrit should have the same status among the Hindus as Persian or Arabic have among the Muslims. If we all arrive at an understanding on this basis most of our difficulties would vanish in thin air. Unfortunately, however, there are some of our countrymen, who are trying to impose on us not only Hindi but a highly Sanskritised Hindi as the national language, even as there are those who are trying to overload the language with Arabic and Persian words. The mistake that they are committing can only result in eventually dividing the country into two hostile camps.

In spite of the fact that for the last forty years it has been sedulously propagated that Urdu is the language of the Muslims and Hindi that of the Hindus, we can prove it that Urdu still occupies the privileged position of being the common language of both the communities. Several Hindu magazines and newspapers are published in Urdu, and many eminent Hindu scholars write in that language. To take a more concrete example in September last year the Education Department

of the United Provinces invited books for selection for the rural libraries. Of the eighteen hundred Urdu books received by the Department, slightly less than half were by Hindu authors, and of the 71 manuscripts received 36 were written by Hindus. This clearly shows that there is a good section of the educated and enlightened Hindus who do not look at the problem from a narrow angle and who still accept the common cultural heritage that has come down to us from our forefathers. In fostering and developing this heritage lies the best guarantee for our national unity, and the successful fulfilment of our future responsibilities. Nor is it correct to say that since we have to take along with us many of our countrymen whose mother tongues are derived from Sanskrit, as for example the Bengalis and the Maharashtrians, Sanskritised Hindi alone can effectively become a common language. This is merely looking at the problem with one eye closed. If we open both the eyes, we shall find that we have also to take into account the inhabitants of Kashmir, Sindh, Baluchistan and the Punjab, whose languages have a different origin. Besides we should not forget that the languages of a purely Dravidian stock are neither attached to Urdu nor Hindi. In fact, if anything, Urdu is commonly spoken by the Muslim population of the Madras Presidency and its influence extends even to remote corners of Malabar. That soft and sweet language of India which was originally called Hindi has

always been in the past and is even today loved and appreciated by the Muslims. It has been sung by many a Muslim mystic since the days of Syed Husain Gaisu-daraz and Saadullah Taraz of Lucknow. Hundreds of Muslim poets have poured out their hearts in this charming language of love and romance. But the Hindi that is being popularised today is entirely different. It is a deliberate creation of the British rule in India, for it never existed before the establishment of Fort William College. Indeed, the British have successfully utilised even our languages to foster divisions amongst us. This is a fact which cannot be denied.

There is another mistaken belief that Urdu is spoken only in the towns and Hindi in the villages. In reality, however the language of the towns and the villages is essefitially the same, the difference being no more than the difference between city and village lives. The Hindi which is to be found in the magazines and newspapers is little understood in the towns and much less in the villages. The truth of this claim can be very easily tested by ordinary experience of everyday life.

In the prevailing atmosphere of communal bitterness I can do no better than appeal to both the Hindus and the Muslims to discard their narrow-mindedness and false nationalism in the larger interests of the country, otherwise an irreparable damage will be done, which will be to no one's benefit.

SAMPURNANAND

What shall be India's national language is no longer a question of mere academic interest. For everyone, except that dwindling group which has managed to convince itself that the position of a lingua indica can be occupied by no language other than English, in any conceivably near future, the search for a suitable Indian language that should take this place has become a live issue and, like all live issues, generated an amount of heat which makes dispassionate thinking difficult. Communal feelings have also, unfortunately, been roused and added, as they always do, to the difficulties of an already difficult situation.

In one sense the problem has already been solved; one is tempted to say it has solved itself. Every one is agreed that if there is any Indian language which is pre-eminently suited for the purpose, it is the language current among the intelligentsia of Northern India; some would be more inclined to say, the language spoken in Northen India. This language is already being used as a medium of communication when non-English speaking people from various provinces happen to meet. It has come to occupy this position due to a variety of historical—political and cultural—causes. There is not much to be sur-

prised at in the fact that the language of those parts of the country, which have been the seats of great empires for the last five thousand years, and contain those places of pilgrimage and those hoary University towns, which draw thousands of men and women every year from all over this great land, should have spread to the most distant nooks and corners.

But this general agreement does not end the controversy: it only leads us on to two questions which are really the crux of the whole problem. The first question is, what shall be the name of our language, the second is, what shall be its form?

Let us take the first question first. Some would have it that we have really two languages in Northern India, Hindi and Urdu and have to choose one of the two. This is an untenable position. The distinctive features of a language are its verbs, pronouns, prepositions and conjunctions. Judged by this criterion, there is only one language. It started from the *prakrit* (the natural one), the language of the people, as distinguished from the Sanskrit (the purified one), the language of the literati. It was generally called Bhasha or Bhakha (the language). Later on, it assimilated a large number of Persian and some Arabic words. This need not have given rise to a change of name. English retains its name, in spite of the very large number of Latin, Greek and other foreign words which have crept into it. There are purists who swear by Anglo-Saxon:

others go in for a language rich in foreign words but both call their speech by one name. The same is true of Bengali, Marathi and Gujerati which contain a rich admixture of Persian-Arabic words. There is no reason why we in Northern India should not have stuck to the old name Bhasha. But events have developed otherwise. That form of the language which contains a fairly large number of Persian-Arabic words is called Urdu. The other variety which sticks to Sanskrit, Prakrit and their derivatives is now called Hindi, a name made current by a number of Muslim authors of the past. But in spite of the influx of words—mostly nouns and adjectives—from outside India, the language is essentially one. Its Urdu variety has been the fortunate recipient of official favour, having dethroned Persian as the language of the Courts. Moreover, Muslims, now-a-days, look upon it in some sense as the symbol of Muslim culture. This is why insistence is being made on teaching Urdu to Muslim children in provinces like Bengal and Madras, children whose forefathers have been good Muslims, notwithstanding their Tamil and Bengali. This has naturally created an opposing current of thought among the Hindus in favour of Hindi. To get out of this tangle, the name Hindustani is being proposed. I would personally have preferred the old name Bhasha; even Hindi has acquired associations of several centuries. It is a name given by Muslims which Hindus have also willingly accepted. But I am prepared to accept this name Hindustani. It is the language of

Hindustan—Northern India. This is not so comprehensive as Hindi—the language of Hind, India, the whole of *Bharatvarsha*. But at any rate, it has some roots in the soil. To call the language Urdu would be to name our language on a principle which, to my knowledge, has not been adopted anywhere else.

But now comes the second, and the more important, question: what should be the form of this Hindustani language? Here I would plead for naturalness. You can force an artificial language down the throats of a few literati but the language of the people grows naturally. It takes words from a hundred sources but assimilates them, makes them flesh of its flesh. Hindustani has a very large number of Sanskrit *tadbhava* words (Sanskrit derivatives) but they have lost their Sanskrit identities. For literary purposes, it also contains a number of Sanskrit *tatsam* words (pure Sanskrit words). It has also a rich store of Persian and, to some extent, of Arabic *tadbhava* and *tatsam* words. It has eagerly adopted a number of words from English and other European languages. There is nothing wrong in all this; it is a proof of the virility of the language.

But we must remember that authors not only use a language; they also mould it and change it. This is the age of a great renaissance in our national life; there is an upsurge in the domains of art and culture, of politics and economics. The language has to serve as the vehicle for new and complex thought and imagery, and its existing

vocabulary does not suffice. Partly this is due to the fact that many of the authors have received their education in English and are not really acquainted with all the wealth and potentialities of Hindustani idiom and vocabulary. But that the language is not sufficiently rich is also a fact which cannot be denied. Therefore words are taken from the sources most easily available, Sanskrit and Persian-Arabic. Except for those few who unnecessarily load their sentences with Sanskrit and Persian words to show off their pseudo-learning, I have no doubt that much of the borrowing from these sources is bonafide. As an author, I am doing this everyday. There is nothing reprehensible in this. Some of us who are born in Hindu families where Sanskrit words have been familiar to us from our cradle will naturally adopt these words; others, for equally good reasons, will go to Persian-Arabic. There is no justification for imputing bad faith to either side. But I must sound one note of warning. What is borrowed must be necessary and, after the borrowing, assimilated. It is regrettable that those who affect what is called the Urdu style are the greatest sinners in this respect. They derive their themes, their imagery, their similes and metaphors from non-Indian sources. The result is that their writing—and here I am thinking particularly of poetry—fails to make an appeal to the people at large. Go to the villagers, Hindu and Muslim, and see how popularly known are the literary gems not only of religious authors like Kabir and Tulasi, Surdas and

Mira, but of others like Jayasi and Padmakar and Rahim and Keshava and then see if anything of the writings of the great Urdu poets has penetrated to these strata. This is the greatest indictment of such writing. No one carried on a propaganda in favour of the first set of authors; their works won popular favour because they appealed direct to the people's hearts, because they spoke of things and feelings and phenomena which the people felt to be part of their very lives. Again, the new tendency is for Arabic-Persian words to retain their identities; they do not become part of the language. An English man takes words from foreign languages at will but bends them to the exigencies of English pronunciation and grammar. This is true of all living languages. It is a practice followed by Hindi writers as well. To give just a few examples, *vidvān*, *samrāt*, *vidushī*, *sakhā*, *tapa*, *griha* are words commonly used. Their Sanskrit plurals are respectively *vidvānsah*, *samrajnah*, *vidushyah*, *sakhayah*, *tapansi*, *grihani*. But no one would for a single moment dream of using these forms in Hindi. The plurals of these words are formed just according to ordinary Hindi grammar. But when Persian-Arabic words are imported, good literary tradition dictates otherwise. You have to learn not only *ālim*, *tasnīf*, *ruqqa*, *jurm*, *shāh*, but also *ulamā*, *tasānif*, *ruqqaāt*, *jarāim*, *shāhān*. This must go. A word is either Hindustani or it is not. If it is, it must forget its ancestry and take its chance with others in its new surroundings.

Always keeping this precaution in mind and,

at the same time, taking every care to guard against unnecessary deliberate pedantry, I am not afraid either of Sanskrit or Persian-Arabic words. I am convinced that in a country like ours where Hindus preponderate and the number of those speaking languages derived from Sanskrit or containing a large number of Sanskrit words in their cultural vocabulary is very large, the literary form of the language will be rich in Sanskrit *tadbhava* and *tatsama* words. This form alone will be easily intelligible to the people whose mother tongue is not Hindustani and to this form alone can they, as they increasingly must, make their contributions. But this will not prevent a large number of Persian-Arabic words from being used. After all, the existence of a large number of synonyms adds to the wealth of a language and adds beauty to its literature. English gives us fine examples of this. To express one single idea, they use the words question, query, interrogation, interpellation. These words do not all derive from the same source. Why must Hindustani have only one word for each idea? If we have a number, some derived from Sanskrit and others from Persian, they will gradually acquire new shades of meanings and thus add further to the power, beauty and wealth of the language and its literature.

But there is a grave danger to this healthy growth. It is rooted in intolerance. If Urdu is to be treated as an expression of Muslim culture and its study made incumbent on Muslims, Hindi will tend, as it is already tending, to be hailed as

the language of the Hindus. Political bodies, therefore, like the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League must take their hands off this problem and leave the language, as the Congress has done, to take its own course of development. Otherwise, the gulf will widen and become unbridgeable. Every writer and speaker should be left free to express himself in the style of language which best suits him. I am sure good sense will soon prevail. Writers and speakers do not speak and write in a vacuum, merely for the satisfaction of their own immortal souls. They will soon be using a language which will secure them the largest number of hearers and readers. Again, leaders of thought must make it a point to know what may, for convenience, be called both forms of the language. If Hindus would cultivate, as they easily can, a knowledge of Persian vocabulary and the Muslims, a knowledge of Sanskrit vocabulary, much of the difficulty experienced at present would disappear automatically. I crave pardon, but I must observe that Muslim friends are more remiss in this respect than Hindus.

And above all, I must plead for greater tolerance, for greater forbearance. It is irritating to be interrupted in the middle of a speech and admonished to speak correct Hindustani. The interrupter either advertises his ignorance or bad manners, generally both. But whoever he is, Hindu or Muslim, he is an enemy of Hindustani. Such a man deserves to be snubbed. We can all follow the substance of a lecture, assuming that

we are acquainted with the subject-matter, even if we do not happen to know a word here or there.

I have no doubt that if the growth of Hindustani is not impeded by the deliberate sabotage practised against it by meddlesome sectarians, it will evolve into one as the most beautiful and powerful of languages. India is heir to a great culture and we want a noble language for its expression.

Note

I have referred to Hindustani as the language of the intelligentsia in Northern India. I know some people swear by the language of what they call the people, the men and women in the villages. Probably, they are not aware that although there is a core of basic Hindustani running all through, there is a considerable difference between the dialects spoken, say, in Eastern and Western U. P. The former, for instance, contains a very high proportion of Sanskrit words, almost in their pure forms. Again, we must be careful as to who constitute the intelligentsia. The language of the world that gravitates round the law-courts is Persianised Hindustani but the courts are only one aspect of social life. There is a vast living current of activities, cultural, religious, social, that finds its expression, so far as the vast majority of the people is concerned, in language that approximates to Sanskritised Hindustani. The language of the intelligentsia, then, is the highest common factor, or, rather, the lowest common multiple of these two variants.

TARA CHAND

The problem which has been lately agitating circles interested in the development of literature in modern Indian languages, especially the language spoken in the United Provinces, is not new. In fact, when in the beginning of the 19th century, at the Fort William College, Calcutta, John Bothwick Gilchirst brought together Lallu Lal, Sadal Misra, Mir Amman, Mir Bahadur Ali, Haidar Baksh Haidari, Kazim Ali Jawan, Mazhar Ali Khan Wila, Nihal Chand, Sher Ali Afsos and others, and set them to make translations from Persian and Braj Bhasha, the problem of the name, character, standard and style of the language selected for employment was posed. Throughout the 19th century, the problem continued to draw attention and in some decades the discussion raged with great vehemence. In the sixties and seventies, John Beames and F. S. Growse carried on a regular debate in the learned journals. Raja Shiva Prasad Sitara-i-Hind supported Beames who pleaded for the maintenance of the Persian and Arabic elements in the language; but Raja Lakshman Singh opposed him, agreeing with Growse that Sanskriticisms should replace those elements. It is of interest to note that the Christian missionaries had not a little to do in emphasizing this tendency.

Sir G. A. Grierson, the universally acknowledged master of Indian philology remarks in his Linguistic Survey of India. Vol. IX. Part 1:

> "Unfortunately, the most powerful English influence has during this period been on the side of the Sanskritists. This Sanskritized Hindi has been largely used by missionaries, and translations of the Bible have been made into it. The few native writers who have stood up for the use of Hindi undefiled have had small success in the face of so potent an example of misguided effort."

Since the beginning of the 20th century the discussion has again assumed an acute form. Thus this problem about which serious argument has proceeded for nearly a century and a half, is neither ephemeral nor unimportant. In fact its solution involves consequences of great practical significance. It is therefore necessary that it should be discussed without undue passion and, so far as possible, in a non-partisan spirit.

Before considering the merits of the question and stating the points of difference between the parties to the discussion, it appears to me necessary that the names which we use should be clearly defined, as, in my opinion, a great deal of misunderstanding is due to lack of clarity in this matter. A number of names have been used in this connection; among them are Bhasha, Hindvi, Hindi, Hindustani, Zaban-i-Dehlavi, Khari Boli, Madhyadesh ki boli, Rekhta, Zaban-i-Urdu-i-Mualla, Urdu.

G. D. NAIDU,
U. M. S., COIMBATORE.

Of these names, Hindi, Hindustani and Urdu are more important than others, and, in fact, controversy is now largely confined to their employment.

Hindi

Let us take the name Hindi first. As every student of Indian philology knows, the name Hindi or Hindvi has been used in a number of diverse senses. Three of the most important are listed below:

1. Hindi or Hindvi has been used to denote generally anything Indian as distinguished from things non-Indian. This usage goes back to the earliest period of Muslim contact with India, and gave rise to the name of the Indo-Aryan dialect which the Muslims began to employ when they settled down in and around Lahore and Delhi. Here are some illustrations of this use. In 1928, Muhammad Aufi compiled an anthology of poems in which he mentions one Khwaja Masud Saad Salman and attributes to him a Dewan composed in Hindvi. In the reign of Alauddin Khilji (1295-1315), Fakhruddin Mubarak Ghaznavi compiled a dictionary in which he gives the Hindi equivalents of Persian words. Amir Khusrau, who died in 1325, uses the terms Hindvi and Hindi. Shah Miranji Shamsul Ushaq, who died in 1495, calls the language of his composition Hindi. In the Deccan the name Hindi was commonly used along with the name Dakhini. Nusrati, who was a poet of the court of Ali Adil Shah II of Bijapur (1656-

1673), speaks of his Hindi verses. When the Mughal court became the patron of the poetry which the Deccan had developed, the poets of Delhi also used the name Hindi for the language they used. Numerous illustrations of this use can be found in the works of poets commencing from Shah Hatim and coming down to Ghalib, and of prose writers from the earliest times to Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan. Hindi in this usage is thus identical with what came to be known as Urdu.

2. The second use of the term Hindi is to denote a group of dialects which belong to what Grierson calls the Tertiary Prakrits, or Dr. S. K. Chatterji calls 'new Indo-Aryan languages'. The region in which they have prevailed extends roughly from the meridian of Sirhind in the West to that of Benares in the East, and from the Himalayan Terai in the North to the watershed of the Nerbada in the South. They are the dialects of the ancient Madhyadesa or Midlands and of the ancient northern and southern Kosala. They comprise the two linguistic families known as Western Hindi and Eastern Hindi. The name Hindi thus includes the following well-recognized dialects: *i*. Bundeli, *ii*. Kanauji, *iii*. Braj Bhasha, *iv*. Bangru, *v*. Hindustani (Grierson) or Khari Boli (tradition and Bharatendu Harishchandra) or Dehlavi (Shaikh Bajan and Amir Khusrau), *vi*. Avadhi, *vii*. Bagheli, and *viii*. Chhattisgarhi. Some scholars add to these eight, Rajasthani (Pts. Surya Karan Pareek and Narottam Das Swami) and Magahi (Rahula Sankrityayana). In this sense Hindi tends to stand for all the spoken

dialects of Northern India.

3. In the third place the name Hindi is specifically used for the modern language which is the literary form of the speech known by the names, Hindustani, Khari Boli or Dehlavi. Phonetically and morphologically, modern Hindi is distinct from the other sister speeches included in the groups of Western Hindi and Eastern Hindi and identical with Hindi (usage 1) or Urdu.

Hindustani

The name Urdu for Hindi (usage 1) was probably first used by Mushafi. Mir, in his anthology Nikat-ush-Shura written in 1752, uses the expression Zaban-i-Urdu-i-Mualla. The name occurs in Qaim's Makhzan-i-Nikat (1754). Baqar Agah, a poet of the Deccan, uses the term Urdu in 1772 as does Ali Ibrahim Khan, the author of Tadhkira-e-Gulzar-i-Ibrahim, in 1783. Ata Husain Tahsin, the author of Nau Tarzi-Murassa (1770 or 1797) speaks of the Zaban-i-Urdu-i-Mualla. Mir Amman calls the language of his book, Bagh-o-Bahar (compiled in 1801), Urdu. In the 19th century the name gained popularity and today it signifies the language which is the literary form of the speech known by the names Hindustani, Khari Boli or Dehlavi. Phonetically and morphologically, it is identical with modern Hindi. Its difference is confined to the vocabulary of its loan words.

The name Zaban-i-Hindustan occurs in the writings of Wajahi (1635), in the history compiled

by Ferishta (1590), and in the Badshah Nama of Abdul Hamid Lahori (1654). This name for the language was thus quite well known in the 16th and 17th centuries, and was adopted by the Europeans who travelled in India at this time. Thus Terry (1616) and Fryer (1673) called it 'Indostan'. Amaduzzi refers to the manuscript of a lexicon *Linguae Indostanicae* (1704), and Ketelaer wrote the first grammar and vocabulary of *Lingua Hindostanica* about 1715. The term Hindustani obtained currency in the 18th century. When Mir Amman composed the Bagh-o-Bahar in 1801, he deliberately set himself to use *theth* Hindustani. Gilchrist used the name Hindustani in the title of his books, e.g., Angrezi-Hindustani Dictionary, and Garcin de Tassy lectured in Paris on the history of Hindouie and Hindoustanie (Hindvi and Hindustani). The name Hindustani has been used for Khari Boli. It has also been used as a synonym for Urdu by many writers, and for Modern Hindi by some.

Grierson's definitions may be reproduced here to clarify the position:

> "Hindostani is primarily the language of the Upper Gangetic Doab, and is also the lingua franca of India, capable of being written in both Persian and Deva-Nagri characters, and without purism, avoiding alike the excessive use of either Persian or Sanskrit words when employed for literature. The name Urdu can then be confined to that special variety of Hindustani in which

> Persian words are of frequent occurrence..... and similarly, Hindi can be confined to the form of Hindustani in which Sanskrit words abound."

Hindustani is thus no new-fangled name, invented to replace Hindi and Urdu, but a well-recognized and old established term for the speech which is the common basis of its two divergent forms, Hindi and Urdu.

Misconception about the name has created curious misunderstandings about the language itself. Even professed historians of language and literature have fallen into mistakes concerning the origin and development of Hindi, Urdu and Hindustani. These mistakes are due either to ignorance of the literature in its different forms, or to the mixing up of the three meanings of the term Hindi given above, especially the second and third. When some people speak about the development of Hindi they fail to take note of the fact that the history of Hindi is distinct from the history of languages like Rajasthani, Braj Bhasha and Avadhi; and they equally ignore the fact that a great deal is common to the history of Hindi and Urdu.

History of Hindustani

Hindustani or Khari Boli, which developed from one of the branches of the new Indo-Aryan dialects, has a continuous history from the time (somewhere about the 10th century) that it separated itself from the other midland dialects. As everyone knows, this basic dialect was and

continues to be the spoken language of the people inhabiting the Upper Gangetic Doab and the neighbouring region. This spoken language was adopted by the Muslims when they settled down in and about Delhi at the end of the 12th century. From the tongues of the new speakers a number of new sounds passed into the sound system of Khari Boli which was a purely Indo-Aryan speech. The morphology of Khari Boli also underwent slight and rather unimportant changes, and it began to absorb loan words from the languages of the Muslim conquerors. This modified speech became the vehicle of literary expression. Amir Khusrau is said to have employed it in the 14th century, but, in the absence of any documents of his time, the matter is not free from doubt. In the Deccan, however, the speech became the medium of both prose and poetry and here a rich literature grew up between the 14th and 18th centuries. The literature produced in the language is replete with *Tadbhavas* (indigenous words), and the literature is not encumbered with exclusively foreign elements. The authors of the Deccan very justifiably considered themselves writers of Hindi, the name which they adopted for the language which they used in their compositions in prose and verse.

In Northern India the situation was very curious. Although Khari Boli or Hindustani was a northern speech, it mainly developed as a literary language in the Deccan, for there is scarcely any important independent work in the language which may be assigned to a time preceding the 17th

century. The reason appears to be this. When Khari Boli emerged as a language fit for polite speech and literary expression in the 13th century, it had to face the rivalry of Rajasthani which was the popular literary language of Northern India in that period, the language in which Jaina works were written and Narpati Nalha and other poets wrote their heroic and other poems.

The rise of the Bhakti movement in the 15th century led to the establishment of three sects, the Nirakar Bhakti, Krishna Bhakti and Ram Bhakti. The saints of the first school, like Kabir, Nanak, Dadu, employed Khari Boli or Hindustani along with other dialects to popularize their faith; the propagators of the second sect, Surdasa, Nand Das, etc., employed Braj Bhasha in their hymns and songs exclusively; the leaders of the third sect headed by Goswami Tulsidas used Avadhi in their compositions.

The main currents of literature in the 15th and succeeding centuries flowed in two channels, Braj Bhasha and Avadhi. Not only did Hindu writers use them; Muslim poets also made them their own. Rahim, Ras Khan, Raslin are as well known in the history of Braj Bhasha poetry as any Hindu poets; and everyone recognizes that but for Malik Muhammad Jaisi's foundational work, Avadhi might never have produced the glorious structure of Ram Charit Manas.

Khari Boli

During this period Modern Hindi or Sans-

kritized Hindustani lived only a furtive existence. Khari Boli was, of course, the living medium of conversation, but so far as literary work was concerned, Hindi (Persianized Hindustani), Braj Bhasha and Avadhi occupied the field, and continued to do so till the end of the 18th century. Some recent writers on Hindi literature have sought to prove that Modern Hindi had a literature in centuries preceding the 18th, but these attempts are hardly successful. A 16-page pamphlet bearing the title *Chand Chhand Barnan ki Mahima*, written by Ganga Bhatt in the 16th century is supposed to be the first specimen of modern Hindi prose, and, longo intervallo, in the 17th century comes Jatmal's *Gora Badal ki Bat*. The first, however, is written in mixed Braj Bhasha and Khari Boli, and the second has been proved to belong to the 19th century, and is the prose rendering of the Rajasthani original in verse. It is said that there are two or three other pieces, dated the 18th century, like *Mandovar ka Vernan*, *Chakatta ki Patsyahi ki Parampara*, in which Khari Boli has been used. But it is scarcely possible to treat them as works of real literary value at all comparable with contemporary works of prose in Hindi (Persianized Hindustani), Braj and Avadhi.

Throughout these centuries, Hindi (Persianized Hindustani) and not Modern Hindi (Sanskritized Hindustani) was the lingua franca of India, and the speech of polite society, whether Hindu or Muslim. So late as 1871, Bharatendu Harishchandra stated in the preface of his book on the

origin of the Agarwala community, 'the speech of the Agarwalas, of all their men and women, is Khari Boli or Urdu', (*in ki boli stri aur purush sab ki, khari boli arthat Urdu hai*). What was true of the Agarwala community was equally true of other communities of Northern India.

It was only at the beginning of the 19th century that Modern Hindi (Sanskritized Hindustani) started its career. Munshi Sada Sukh Lal Niyaz, who on retirement from the service of the East India Company settled down in Allahabad, made a free translation of *Srimad Bhagavata* and gave it the title of *Sukh Sagar*. About the same time Insha Allah Khan composed *Rani Ketki ki Kahani*. Then Sadal Misra and Lallu Lal were directed by John Gilchrist and the English professors of the Fort William College to create a literary medium for the Hindus which would take the place of Hindi (Persianized Hindustani). Mr. F. E. Keay, the author of a History of Hindi Literature in the Heritage of India Series, says, "Urdu, however, had a vocabulary borrowed largely from the Persian and Arabic languages, which were specially connected with Muhammadanism. A literary language for Hindi-speaking people which could commend itself more to Hindus was very desirable, and the result was obtained by taking Urdu and expelling from it words of Persian or Arabic origin, and substituting for them words of Sanskrit or Hindi origin." Again, "The Hindi of Lallu Lal was really a new literary dialect." Pandit Chandra Dhar Sharma Guleri wrote a series of

articles in the Nagari Pracharini Patrika in 1921 (1978 Samvat) on old Hindi. He says, "*Mere kahne ka tatparya yeh tha ki Hinduon ki rachi hui purani kavita jo milti hai woh Brajbhasha ya purvi Baiswari, Avadhi, Rajasthani, Gujrati adi hi main milti hai, arthat "Pari Boli" main pai jati hai. Khari Boli ya Pakki Boli ya Rekhta ya Vartman Hindi ka arambh kal ke gadya aur padya ko dekhkar yehi jan parta hai ki Urdu rechna men Farsi Arbi Tatsam ya Tadbhavon ko nikalkar Sanskrit ya Hindi Tatsam aur Tadbhav rakhne se Hindi bana li gai hai.*" M. Jules Bloch, the author of 'La Formation de la Langue Marathe' supports the statements of Keay and Guleri. According to him, "Lallu Lal sous l'inspiration du Dr. Gilchrist, changea tout cela en ecrivant son celebre Prem Sagar, dont les parties en prose etaient en somme de l'ourdou dont les mots persans auraient eté remplaces partout par des mots indo-aryens.....Le nonveau dialecte donna une 'langue franque' aux Hindous." (Lallu Lal, under the inspiration of Dr. Gilchrist, changed all that by writing his famous Prem Sagar, whose prose portions are on the whole Urdu, from which Persian words have been throughout replaced by Indo-Aryan words.....The new dialect gave a 'lingua franca' to the Hindus).

Hindi-135 Years Old

Some recent Hindi writers have protested against this account of the origin of Modern Hindi, but so far as I can see, their protests do not seem to hold much water. It appears to me that a

dispassionate study of the origin and growth of Modern Hindi (Sanskritized Hindustani) can lead only to one conclusion: namely, that the language is only 135 years old, and perhaps not even that. For although Sadal Misra and Lallu Lal heralded the dawn of modern Hindi, it proved to be a false dawn, as darkness descended upon Hindi again and was not lifted till after the Mutiny of 1857, when Raja Shiva Prasad, Raja Lakshman Singh, Babu Harishchandra and others lifted it once for all and ushered in the true dawn of Modern Hindi literature.

To avoid misunderstandings, let me state the following propositions, which, I believe, will be regarded by every scientific student of our language as true:

1. Magahi, an eastern member of the new Indo-Aryan speech group has a literature going back to the eighth century as shown by Rahula Sankrityayana.

2. Rajasthani, a western member of the same group, had an abundance of literature from the 12th to the 19th centuries, but has now ceased to be a literary language.

3. Braj Bhasha, also a western branch of the same group, flourished as a literary language from the 15th to the 19th century. It ceased to be the language of prose after the rise of Modern Hindi, and is now receding into the background as a vehicle of poetry.

4. Avadhi, an eastern branch, came into prominence in the 15th century, but never acquired

the same popularity as Braj Bhasha. It is no longer regarded as a literary language.

5. Other branches of Western and Eastern Hindi were used as instruments of literary expression from the 14th to the 19th century, but they have all ceased to be so used now.

6. Khari Boli or Hindustani has two literary forms. The earlier form called Hindi by its users, and now known as Urdu, has a continuous history from the 14th century to the present day. The second form, known as Modern Hindi, came into literary use at the beginning of the 19th century and has made rapid progress since the Mutiny.

Hindi, Urdu and Hindustani

A third set of misconceptions exists in regard to the relation between Hindi, Urdu and Hindustani. Now there should be no doubt in anybody's mind that the three names indicate one and the same language. In order to determine the relationship of languages, it is necessary to resort to a comparative examination of their (*a*) phonetic features, (*b*) morphological or syntactical features, and (*c*) vocabularies. But among these three elements the first two are of primary importance and the third of secondary importance only. All writers on philology agree that the grammatical structure of a language is the most stable part of it, which remains intact from generation to generation in all its progressive transformations; that the phonetic system, while less stable than the morphological, has a certain fixity; but that the

vocabulary of a language is subject to brusque and capricious innovations. A. Meillet, one of the greatest living authorities of language, says: "La prononciation et la grammaire forment des systemes fermes; toutes les parties de chacun de ces systemes sont liees les unes aux autres. Le systeme phonetique et le systeme morphologique se pretent donc pen a recevoir 'des emprunts'.....au contraire, les mots ne constituent pas un systeme; tout au plus formentils de petits groupes;..... chaque mot existe pour ainsidire isolenent.....C'est donc avant tout par la persistance de la prononciation et de la grammaire que se traduit linguistiquement la volonte continue de parler une certaine langue qui definit la "parante de langues." (Pronunciation and grammar constitute fixed systems; all the parts of each of these systems are interlinked. The phonetic and morphological systems are little disposed to receive loans.....on the contrary, words do not form a system; at most they form small groups:.....each word exists, so to speak, in isolation.....Thus the continuous desire to speak a certain language, which defines the 'relationship of tongue,' manifests itself linguistically above all through the persistence of pronunciation and grammar.) Thus, although the Persian language is abundantly stocked with Arabic words, still it belongs to the Aryan group. English remains a Teutonic tongue, in spite of large Latin elements and the difference in the styles of those who lean towards an Anglo-Saxon vocabulary and those who prefer Johnsonese does not create to wlangu-

ages. Nearer home, Sindhi and Punjabi illustrate the same principles. They have borrowed numerous words from Persian and Arabic, yet their phonetics and grammar proclaim them to be Indo-Aryan. Vocabulary depends on the caprices of history, of which the Great War furnishes the latest illustration. In England the German names of aristocratic houses were abandoned in favour of English names, so much so that the House of Hanover became the House of Windsor. French, which is fastidious in the adoption of foreign words, opened its arms wide to receive English words, like 'gentleman', 'sport'. The Russians expelled the German suffix 'burg' from the names of their cities and substituted the Slavic 'grad'. Thus St. Petersburg became Petrograd, and, when the wheel of fortune laid Peter's dynasty low, Petrograd was transformed into Leningrad. Historic causes, national attractions and repulsions and other social factors continually affect vocabulary.

What do we find in the light of these principles? The sound system of Hindi, Urdu and Hindustani is identical. Each contains the same number of three classes of sounds: old Indo-Aryan vowels and consonants, new Indo-Aryan vowels and consonants, Semitic sounds. This fact is admitted, sometimes grudgingly, by the grammarians, e.g., Pt. Kamta Prasad Guru in his *Hindi Vyakarana*, Dr. Dhirendra Varma in his *Hindi Bhasha ka Itihas*, M. Abdul Haq in his *Qawaid-i-Urdu*. The phonetic system identifies Hindi, Urdu and Hindustani, but differentiates them from other

Aryan and Semitic languages, e.g., Sanskrit, Braj Bhasha, Avadhi, Persian and Arabic.

Again, the grammar of the three is more or less identical. 'There is no difference of importance between the declensions and conjugations used in Urdu and Hindi respectively.' (Grierson). In the opinion of J. Beames, 'it betrays therefore a radical misunderstanding of the whole bearing of the question, and of the whole science of philology, to speak of Urdu and Hindi as two distinct languages.' ('A Comparative Grammar of the Modern Aryan Languages.')

In regard to vocabulary the identity is not complete. The vocabulary of a language consists of original or indigenous words of the spoken dialect, loan words or words borrowed from foreign languages, and compounds and derivatives. So far as Urdu and Hindi are concerned, they have numerous words of the first class which are common, e.g., almost all the verbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections. So far as nouns and adjectives are concerned, in addition to their common indigenes, both have borrowed from Sanskrit, Prakrit, Persian and Arabic, besides other languages. The exact measure of the loan is not known as exhaustive dictionaries drawn up on rigorously scientific lines do not exist. M. Sayyid Ahmad Dehlavi, the author of the famous dictionary, *Farhang-i-Asafia*, has analysed the words collected by him. The total number of words is 50,000; the number of loan words from Arabic is 7584, from Persian 6041, from Sanskrit

554, from English 500, and from others 181. The remainder are indigenous. If we turn to the pages of the Hindi dictionary known as *Hindi Sabda Sagar* and compiled under the auspices of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha, we find that almost every one of these 7584 Arabic and 6041 Persian words is included in it. This is a clear recognition of the fact that even as regards loan words the difference between Hindi and Urdu is not so great as some people imagine. So far as compounds and derivatives are concerned, the methods of combination and the use of vocables (affixes) in forming derivatives are to a considerable extent common, as a reference to the grammars of the two languages shows.

Arguments for Sanskritized Hindi

While it is necessary to point out the similarity between the vocabularies of Urdu and Hindi, one must recognize that the differences between them are quite large, and that if proper measures are not taken they may increase. The writers of Hindi and Urdu are divided between two schools. One school considers it necessary to borrow extensively from the classical languages; the other wishes to limit the quantity of such loans. They use similar arguments for their choice. For instance, the Hindi writers of the first school base the desirability of the extensive use of Sanskrit *Tatsams* and the rejection of Perso-Aryan words on the following grounds:

(*a*) Hindi is an Indo-Aryan dialect having close relations with other Indo-Aryan dialects like Bengali, Marathi, Gujrati. It is natural for them

all to borrow from the same parent language which is Sanskrit. The more Sanskrit *Tatsams* are used and the more Sanskrit roots are employed in technical terms, the nearer will they come and the easier will it be for speakers of the sister dialects to understand and use Hindi. Hindi will thus have a chance of becoming the inter-provincial language of India.

(*b*) Words carry about them a cultural atmosphere. Sanskrit words are redolent of the aroma of ancient Indian culture, while Perso-Arabic words have an alien reference and significance. Therefore an Indian language should prefer words of the first class to those of the second.

These arguments are weighty; nay more, they strike a sympathetic chord in the heart. They should therefore be examined with earnest care.

These Arguments Examined

Those who favour Arabic as a source of loan-words, technical or otherwise, advance arguments which are similar. According to them, Arabic is the language of the sacred scriptures of a great community and enshrines traditions which are dear to it. Again, Arabic is a living modern tongue which is rapidly assimilating the sciences of the West and therefore provides a suitable source of terms required in modern thought. It is fairly extensively studied in all parts of India by the religious-minded and its sounds and phrases are familiar to a wide circle of people. It has continuously exercised influence upon Hindustani or

Khari Boli, of which the phonetic and grammatical systems and vocabulary are proofs. In the past, great writers of Braj Bhasha like Surdas and Avadhi like Tulsidas felt no compunction in using Arabic words in their songs and poems; in fact thousands of such words have become a part of the language, to which the *Hindi Sabda Sagar* is a witness.

None can say that no value need be attached to these arguments. But after giving the most careful consideration to them one cannot resist the conclusion that between these divergent views the middle course is the wisest.

Against the Sanskritization of Hindustani voices have been raised, not only by such eminent European linguists as J. Beames and Sir G. A. Grierson, but also by Indian scholars like Raja Shiva Prasad, Pt. Balkrishna Bhat, Mm. Pt. Giridhar Sharma, Pt. Padma Singh Sharma, and Pt. Ayodhya Singh Upadhyaya.

I shall quote only the opinion of Pt. Giridhar Sharma here. He says:

> *Sanskritmaya bana kar apne Bengal, Maharashtra, adi men Hindi ka prachar shighr kar liya, kintu woh kewal shikshiton ki bhasha ban gai, sarva sadharan use bilkul na samajh sake, to kya labh hua? Labh kya bari hani ho gai.....Hindi bhasha men Hindi bhasha ke shabd hi pratham lene chahiyen, phir jab unse avashyakta puri na ho, tab Sanskrit bhasha se saral shabd lene chahiyen.*

On the other side, scholars like Syed Ali Bilgrami, Maulvi Wahidud Din Salim and Maulvi

Abdul Haq have attempted to moderate the zeal of the Arabicists. M. Wahidud Din pointed out in his book on the formation of technical terms (*Waz-i-Istalahat*):

> *Hamko is dhoke se bachna chāhiye aur Hindi zabān ke alfāz wa haruf se, jo hamāri zabān ki fitrat men dākhil hain, nāk bhaun chadhāna nahin chāhiye. Ham jis tarah Arbi Farsi se istalāhat lete hain, isi tarah Hindi se bhi be takalluf waze istalahat men kām lena chāhiye.*

Unfortunately these groups have been working in isolation from one another, and therefore their advice and warning have gone unheeded. The result is that Hindi and Urdu are fast becoming the jargon of the learned, remote from the speech of the common people. They are creating barriers of unintelligibility between neighbours, instead of providing them with a medium of mutual understanding, the circle of their usefulness is being narrowed, the sweep of their popularity limited.

'Cultural Affinities'

Surely the argument regarding cultural affinities is overstrained. Culture is an affair of values, spiritual, moral, social and aesthetical. These values arise partly out of men's struggles with nature whereby groups sustain themselves, and partly from the inner conflicts whereby they win self-directing unity. Thus physical and psychological factors determine culture. We have, therefore, regional cultures, French, English, Chinese,

Persian cultures; or class cultures, aristocratic, bourgeois, proletarian cultures. We speak of an Indian culture; but is there any meaning in an Urdu or a Hindi culture? The Urdu (Persianized Hindustani) language is an instrument which has been used in the past for disseminating Hindu religious ideas; it is being used for that purpose today; and, so far as one can see, will be used in future to do the same. Similarly, Hindi (Sanskritized Hindustani) has given service to the Muslims. And why not? If Chinese, Persian, Pushto, Japanese, Avadhi, Bengali and a host of tongues having no relationship with Arabic can be used as media for speech and writing embodying Muslim religious ideas, why should the employment of a number of Sanskrit words in Hindustani spell disaster and ruin to religion?

Indian culture is a modern growth to which every community inhabiting this great land makes its contribution; its ideals of truth and worth have a national reference transcending the particularisms of provinces, races, creeds. The physical and social conditions in which this culture is taking shape are different from what they were in the past, and our struggles, inner and outer, are no longer the same. A transvaluation of old values is going on amidst us, needing a new interpretation and a new expression. It is this growing consciousness of a common culture which must inspire, more and more, the literary creations of India, whatever the idiom used, Tamil, Telugu, Bengali, Gujrati, Marathi or Hindustani.

Let us then not lay too much stress on the differing cultural atmospheres of Urdu and Hindi. On the other hand, let us consider the practical consequences of a policy which inspires coiners of technical terms like the following:

English—1. Abscissa, 2. Absolute Term, 3. Accelerate, 4. Algebra, 5. Alternando, 6. Antecedent, etc.

Hindi—1. Bhuj, 2. Param Pad, 3. Gati vriddhi karna, 4. Bijganit, 5. Ekantar nishpatti, 6. Purva pad, etc.

Urdu—1. Fasla or Maqtua, 2. Raqam Mutlaq, 3. Isra-i-harakat, 4. Jabr-o-muqabala, 5. Tabdil, 6. Mukaddam, etc.

Practical Difficulties

I have taken these from the dictionaries of technical terms issued by the Nagari Pracharini Sabha, Benares, and the Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Urdu, Aurangabad. They are a sample of the terms used in Algebra, and they show what a wide gulf is being created between the two forms of Hindustani by their adoption. So long as the education of Indian youth was carried on through the medium of English, it did not matter whether there were two sets of technical terms or one in the Indian language, but now that education at the secondary stage is being imparted in our own language and we are moving towards the stage when the highest education will be given through it, the question of duplication of terms assumes great importance, especially in North India outside Bengal, where

the devotees of Urdu and Hindi live intermingled. If Urdu and Hindi become unintelligible to the pupils, the result will be that teaching will have to be duplicated in schools, which will inevitably either reduce efficiency or increase expenditure. In the Universities these difficulties will be magnified even more enormously. The problem of learning, research and dissemination of knowledge will be greatly complicated. Shall we have two sets of teachers in each University for Urdu and for Hindi?

What, again, will be the language of the legislatures and of the government? In the Punjab they are debating the question today, and soon we shall have to consider it in the U. P., Bihar, and, lastly, at Delhi. Then there is the question of public amusement and instruction, radio, cinema and theatre, and that of interprovincial trade and intercourse. What Indian language will take the place of English? For I take it that we are all agreed that English cannot possibly serve those purposes in future.

It seems to me a tremendous pity that merely because of the loan words in the language we are letting the two forms of the same language to drift and we are making the solution of practical educational and administrative problems more and more difficult.

Plea for Hindustani

Hindustani, as I have tried to show above, is no artificial speech. It has existed these thousand

years as a distinct language. It has a considerable literature, for I include almost all that has been written in the Deccan whether in prose or in poetry as part of Hindustani. In the North, in spite of the efforts of enthusiasts for foreign imitations, there is a good deal of poetry which is written in simple, common, everyday speech. Illustrations could be found in the *dewans* of any period. Háli's *Munajat-i-Bewa* and *Barkhrut* are extremely good examples of an Urdu which both in sentiment and in idiom are wholly Hindustani. Modern Hindi also furnishes illustrations of how Hindustani should be written. I shall content myself with putting forward the name of only one author, but one who stands unrivalled as a creative artist in the history of modern Hindi Literature, I refer to M. Premchand.

The fact of the matter is that so far as literary composition is concerned modern Hindi and Urdu are merely two styles of Hindustani, while in regard to scientific treatises their difference is confined to loan-words alone. It appears to me that it is not impossible to remove this difference, provided there is a will to do so. Of the desirability of this course I am personally fully convinced, and I make a few suggestions for the consideration of those who desire that the gulf between the two should be bridged.

1. Measures should be adopted to encourage the study of Modern Hindi by Urdu speaking people, and of Urdu by Hindi speaking people.

2. A dictionary of words used by standard

authors of Urdu and Hindi should be compiled.

3. A grammar on modern lines giving the analysis of the phonetic and morphological systems of Hindi and Urdu and a generous treatment of the rules of combination and derivation should be drawn up.

4. A dictionary of technical terms for the use of Hindi and Urdu authors should be compiled.

5. An English-Hindustani dictionary for the use of translators should be compiled.

6. Anthologies of prose and verse containing literary pieces written in easy Urdu and Hindi should be put together.

Of these suggestions, some could be carried out by individuals or associations, but others would require the help of the government. For instance, measures to promote the study of Urdu and Hindi could be enforced at schools by the education department alone. Again, a dictionary of technical terms could not be compiled without an agreement between Hindi and Urdu scholars of the regions where these languages are in use. As this question affects the educational advancement of a number of provinces and states, it will be difficult to tackle it successfully without the help of their governments. But the practical issues involved are of such importance as to justify their intervention. In the absence of an authority like the Academy in France, a committee consisting of representatives of governments, universities, literary and scientific bodies, could be appointed to consider the specific problems of common technical terms

and give an authoritative solution.

If an agreement is reached on the question of words required for scientific and technical purposes, the sting of the quarrel between Hindi and Urdu will have been removed, the difficulties created by the existence of two languages in the same region will have been smoothed out, and Hindi and Urdu will then tend to merge into one, as the medium of both speech and literature.

ASAF ALI

Urdu was until recently described as 'Lingua franca' of India. It is by preference, called 'Hindustani' by some. But 'What is in a name'? It is the language of millions of Indians. It certainly is one of the principal languages spoken in India, if not the most current. But Urdu is not merely a language which abounds in imaginative literature and poetry and which is rapidly developing into a modern language, it is the symbol of a type of civilization, and the formulae of a culture.

The preliminary point about the name may be disposed of first. Those who prefer the word 'Hindustani' object to nothing in the language itself but to the name Urdu, and they also insist that the language should be kept as free from the influence of Arabic and Persian as possible, whereas the tendency in some quarters is to import as many Persian and Arabic words into it as can be conveniently adjusted without displacing the Hindi verbs and current idioms. But those who advocate the cause of Hindi stand on a different ground. They desire first to purge Urdu of Arabic and Persian influences which have gone to make it what it is today, and then to steep it in Sanskrit and finally to change its script also from the prevalent Persian to Deo-Nagri or a modified

form of the Sanskrit script, maintaining that it is the one script in whose modified forms a majority of the Indian languages are written.

The controversy is more or less of a political and communal nature. It is sufficient for our purpose to know that Urdu is not Hindi, and the word Hindustani is being used nowadays only as a synonym for simplified Urdu.

Urdu also stands for a characteristic culture. It represents the resultant of the impact of several types of Asiatic civilizations. It is the meeting ground of the Aryan, the Greek, the Tartar, the Arab, and the Persian. It has been nourished on the breast of all these cultures, although its main strength is derived from the Indian soil. Like so many independent streams the Greco-Arab, the Perso-Saracenic, the Dravido-Aryan cultures flowed into the main stream of that civilization, which reached its high watermark in Magadha, and finally assumed the volume and course known as Urdu. The intermixture of so many different types of civilization, and the inevitable impact of foreign influences upon the indigenous life of the people brought forth the off-spring that has been developing under the name of Urdu. This brings us to the very foundation of the cultural architecture, which we can reconstruct step by step in our imagination. Our analytical and synthetic efforts must inevitably go on simultaneously.

The word "Urdu" comes from the Turkish language and means "Army" or "troop". Here we have the most direct evidence of the origin of

the language. At some remote time, probably during the first permanent encampment of the Turkomans in India, a large muster of troops, which included both foreign and Indian people (combatants and camp followers) which must have led to the improvisation of "Zaban-i-Urdu", the language of the camp. Such improvisation must have been wholly spontaneous dictated by the force of circumstances, such as daily commercial transactions and concomitant social intercourse, between the soldiers and the local traders and others. As a common vehicle of thought it must, in the natural course, have implied a mutual assimilation of one another's modes of life, customs and manners, and thus not merely was the foundation stone laid for the structure of a language, but also for the superstructure of a special type of civilisation which reflected some thing of all who had pledged themselves to everlasting comradeship, binding themselves and their posterity in perpetual bonds of a composite language and culture. Like all the great and sacred days, the day when that unwritten pact of eternal friendship and brotherhood was signed and sealed, came and went unchronicled, but it bequeathed to uncounted generations an imperishable heritage, a common destiny, a sacred community of interest and aspirations. All those who spoke the Urdu language and those who understood the Urdu language were linked together by their forefathers on that sacred but unrecorded day in chains which could never break. Calendars have their red-letter days, but there is

none which commemorates the birth of the language we speak.

When the foreign invaders descended on the fair plains of India, not the earliest, but of the middle ages, Sanskrit had already lapsed into the dignified position of the classical language of India. The readers of Kalidas, Bana and Bhawabhuti were there; the doctors of the Sanskrit literature abounded, and many a State document was still written in Sanskrit, but the language of the people had taken an easier course. The spoken languages in the North generally at that time were a blend of the Magadhi or Pali of the Budhistic days and the Sanskrit of the mediaeval Renaissance, into which certain words from Greek and Pahlvi had been quietly absorbed.

Dr. Horrwitz in his "Short History of Indian Literatures" says, "By the year 1000, Sanskrit and Prakrit had been fused into melodious Hindi, the Mediaeval speech of the Hindus." Prakrit simply means a dialect, and ever since the ascendency of the Koshla dynasty Sanskrit had been undergoing vast changes and breaking up into various *Prakrits*. The Buddhistic canons were written in Pali, or the priestly language of the Magadhi people, and Pali held sway for nearly nine hundred years or more, displacing Sanskrit from its predominance as the spoken language of the Hindus (while many assert that Sanskrit never came to be the spoken language of the country) until the revival of Hinduism and the ascendency of the Brahmins in the 6th century A. D., when Sanskrit was once again

ensconced on the high throne of the State language. But the changes wrought during the preceding centuries in the speech of the people had left their indelible impress behind and Sanskrit could not reconquer the masses but to be relegated to the realm of the classics of the country. Braj Bhasha, a very largely modified form of Hindi, far from being in its infancy was so far advanced that it was not merely the language of popular songs and the current literature of the time, but was the only language that obtained in and roundabout Mathra, Brindaban, Ajmer and Kannauj, the then hub of the Hindu civilization in Northern India. How far Prakrit was influenced by Greek and Persian influences, it is not easy to determine. But History gives us more than enough material for conjecture. That Darius founded an Indian Satrapy is beyond doubt, and that the Indians followed the Persian legions against the Greeks is not disputed. Professor A. G. Rawlinson in his "Indian Historical Studies" has gone to the extent of saying "There seems little doubt that the Persian occupation of the Punjab made a great impression upon India; Persian customs and Persian architecture were probably adopted at the courts of some of the local rajahs." One unmistakable trace of Persian influence lasted in Western India for many centuries after the Persian Empire had disappeared. This was the Kharoshthi script introduced by the officials of the Achaemenids which was not entirely replaced by the Brahmi writing till the fourth century A. D. The Kharoshthi is undoubtedly Armaic

in origin, reading like other kindred scripts, from right to left. *Alexander found Persian and Babylonian customs in existence at Taxila, and the customs of the Hindu courts in the north of India were decidedly Persian, at least such is the conclusion at which we arrive after reading Megasthenes' description of Chandragupta's court.* The question of the Greek influence on the arts and literature of the Hindus has been a favourite subject with many writers, and while Mr. Vincent has traced Greek influence in the immortal works of Kalidas, Professor Rawlinson says "envoys from the West were in attendance at Patlipatra, and the presence of a Greek rani must have enhanced the philhellenic tendencies of the court." "Shakuntala", the famous drama of Kalidas, no doubt bears some internal evidence in support of Prof. Rawlinson's conjecture, for instance, when King Dushayanta in a moment of dejection, desires to be amused, he is entertained by *two Greek dancing girls*. So the Greek arts and literature did not leave the Hindus of the period altogether unaffected. The exact amount of the early Persian and Greek influences on Sanskrit as a language or at least on Prakrit, the dialect which became the polished Pali in which Asoka's edicts were issued can only be determined by a philological analysis of the language in question. But it cannot be denied that these foreign influences did operate on the life and language of the people. The highly complex elaboration and refinement of Sanskrit, and the consequent tendency among the generality of the people to simplify it for colloquial purposes

combined with the impact of Greek and Persian influence on Sanskrit seem to be some of the earliest causes which led to the breaking up of that language into so many dialects or Prakrits. The Prakrit spoken in the North became Pali in the days of the Koshalas, and very probably other Prakrits assumed other forms now current in Bengal, Gujrat and Maharashtra and the dialects which obtain in Rajputana and other parts of the Northern country. Pali was displaced by Sanskrit again in the sixth century A. D. and gradually, but surely, degenerated into the Hindi of the later days. Braj Bhasha, the language of Braj or Muthra was in vogue in the civilized part of Northern India when the Huns of the East commenced their invasions of India. Although some parts of Gujrat had been conquered by the Arabs as early as the beginning of the eighth century A. D. no invasion of any note was made until the time of Sabuktagin, who bequeathed to Mahmud a reign of repeated invasions of India. During the subsequent rule of the Ghoris, the Aibaks, the Khiljis, the Syeds and the Afghans over vast areas of the North, and the establishment of Qutabshahi kingdoms in the Deccan, Braj Bhasha was the language of the people with whom the "troops" from Turkistan, Arabia, and Persia came into direct contact, and this contact effected the graceful and inevitable compromise, which finally came to be imposed upon the ruler and the ruled alike, levelling their relative difference and kneading the heterogeneous mass of so many into one Urdu speaking Nation.

Braj Bhasha, being the dominant language, became the main stream into which the tributaries of Arabic, Persian and Turkistani flowed freely. It became the dominant factor in the nascent "Zaban-i-Urdu", and not merely supplied all the main verbs but a large mass of nouns, pronouns, adjectives and adverbs, which have held a permanent place in the Urdu language ever since.

Now began the history of the influence the foreign Muslims exercised in the shaping of this language, and the manners of the peoples who had come to speak the language known as Urdu. For centuries to come, for at least five centuries after the permanent settlement of the foreign Muslims in India, till long after the advent of the Moghal rule even the spoken language of the Muslim gentry and of the foreign Muslim families connected with the State *remained Persian*; and the Court language of the Moghals never ceased to be Persian till as recently as the deposition of the last Moghal king of Delhi, whose last message to Queen Victoria, an appeal for better treatment of so exalted a State prisoner as himself was in Persian, although he was not merely one of the better known poets of the Urdu language but both in theory and actual life the very fountain-head of the best Urdu. The Qila-i-Mualla or the King's palace then and always was considered the very purest source of the peoples' language. But while the Court language of the Muslim Kings continued to be Persian, Urdu proceeded by leaps and bounds, winning adherents everywhere in the North.

As early as the time of the Khiljis, Muhammadan authors and poets of note had commenced assimilating the language of the people, the earliest trace of which we find in Khusro's imperishable works. Khusro was a poet of the finest genius the bulk of whose works is in Persian. Among his contemporaries he was easily the first, and still occupies a very high, perhaps the highest, place among the Muslim poets who though born in India wrote in Persian, unless we give Bedil and Ghalib a substantial share of that honour with Khusro. He devoted a great deal of his genius to the language then known as "Hindi", a mellifluent form of Braj Bhasha and up to now, generally, employed in the composition of lyrical songs. Urdu that was not, but it was the precursor and the parent of Urdu. Hindi vocabulary was largely confined to a limited number of social wants until then. Without the aid of Sanskrit, or some other language it was unsuited to the expression of scientific or philosophical thought. It was conspicuously simple and sensuous in expression, and most amazingly suited to lyrical rhythm. It was just like the prattler's lisping expression which sounded incredibly sweat. But it could not go further.

The next landmark is a more definite one. Wali is accepted as one of the first poets of Urdu. But it is clear from his works that the Hindi of Khusro had undergone great changes. It had ceased to be Hindi, and enriched by Persian vocabulary and diction, assumed the earliest form of

the composite language. The "Zaban-i-Urdu" had now found a poet, and was henceforward to enlist an ever-increasing number of votaries. There is much room for conjecture in assigning to Hindi script the part which it could have played in shaping Urdu after the Sanskrit model, and yet there is more room for argument in making out a case in favour of the Persian script, the adoption of which infused new ideas, and a new spirit into it. It is quite obvious that Persian being the language of the Court, it was cultivated with great assiduity by all, and Urdu the spoken language of the people could not resist the inflow of its influence. Voluntary or not the adoption of the Persian script certainly perpetuated the new-born language. But the phenomenon is unique. The language of the conquered robbed the conqueror of his dearest possession, his mother-tongue; and that at so cheap a cost. The Hindi script did not supersede the Persian script, but the bulk of the Hindi language displaced the Persian language. Like French, after the Norman Conquest of England, Persian remained the language of the Court and of the superior classes, but a blend of Persian and Hindi, like the Anglo-Saxon and French, continued to be the language of the masses. But unlike Anglo-Saxon, Hindi had no literature of any account to offer to the Persian language. Sanskrit abounded in literature of all description, romance and drama, sciences and arts; everything was to be found in Sanskrit, but very little beyond sweet speech in Hindi. On the other hand Persian abounded in

rich literature. Persian was under the influence of Arabic, the language of a vast and unique civilization. But Hindi developed such literature as it came to possess by the middle of the nineteenth century during the Muslim rule. R. C. Dutt in his "The Civilization of India", says "Hindi is the vernacular of Northern India, and Hindi literature begins with the epic of Chand, the contemporary of the last Hindu king of Delhi. The religious movement of Ramananda and Kabir followed, and led to the formation of a vast mass of sacred Hindi literature. Rajputana boasts of heroic ballads and poetry connected with the martial deeds of its feudal chiefs." But Hindi literature began, according to Dutt, with the epic of Chand, who, he says, was a contemporary of the last Hindu king of Delhi, namely Pirthi Raj. This would take us to the concluding years of the twelfth century.

But Hindi made further progress. Sur Dass wrote his epic Sur Sagar in the sixteenth century, Keshave Dass wrote his Bhakta Mala, and Bihari Lal his Satsai. But the most eminent work in Hindi (Awadhi Bhasha) is Tulsi Das's Ramayana. Works have appeared since R. C. Dutt enumerated the above works in Hindi, but perhaps none having the classical merit of Ramayana. Now it will be perfectly clear even to a superficial observer that Hindi had really no literature to offer to Persian, while Persian had enough and to spare in almost every branch of literature. Not merely was Persian the result of centuries of a highly refined civili-

zation, but it was fully imbued with Greek and Sanskrit influences and was deeply steeped in highly enriched Arabic literature. It was, therefore, a very natural thing for Urdu to fall under Persian influences to a certain extent. Hindi, however, supplied all the groundwork. Hindi civilization of the day reduced as it was to a degree of picturesque simplicity, superb elegance born of decaying chivalry, reposeful and genuine, furnished the graceful background, on which the refined Persian, the vigorous Arabic, and the valiant Turkish influences blended together to form the culture which distinguishes the finer type of Urdu-speaking people from the rest of the world. A process of mutual absorption and assimilation could not fail to produce the effect which Urdu stands for.

The Persian temperament, highly artistic and refined, imaginative to a fault when blended with the vigorous, vitalising, and *manly* influence of Arabic literature, and further galvanised by the contact of the half-uncouth, almost barbaric lustiness of Tartars could not fail to produce the ideal culture, which received its finishing polish from the mellow, simplicity and lyrical grace of the Hindu civilization of the day. To this the Urdu language and culture bear a most eloquent testimony.

During the last one hundred years the language has arrived at sturdy manhood. No longer the prattler of Khusro's days, it had become a promising youngster when Wali commenced tending it. It had outgrown adolescence long before

Mir Taqi, Sauda and Insha handled it. In fact it had reached the state of an ambitious youth when Mir Hasan wrote his famous *Masnawi*. At the time of Zafar and Zauq it had begun to show signs of decadence, for the refining process had reached its limit and the Persian tendencies of Ghalib had begun to trespass on the legitimate province of innovation. While Ghalib's Urdu prose may never be excelled, either in originality or dignity, his Urdu poetry marks a very prominent cleavage between the accepted Urdu of the day, and the highly Persianised style to which he gave currency. Nazir of Agra, a much neglected poet of unparalleled eminence, wrote in the language of the people, and almost overplussed Urdu with Hindi; but the decadent influence of Ghalib turned the tide of Urdu into quite another channel, and but for the latter day appearance of Dagh, Urdu was doomed to perish in the cradle of Persian.

The prose works in the Urdu literature are chiefly romantic, religious and historical. Fiction and journalism have been strongly in evidence for over half a century, and philosophical works, works of travels, biographies, and translations from other languages are copious. Scientific works are scanty and original scientific works almost wholly wanting, but translations are being made every day. The language is being rapidly modernised and made adaptable to all the modern needs. Dramas are not lacking. Drama is not new to Sanskrit, but to Urdu it is exotic, and being modelled on the Persian pattern, it is heir to the

same defects as Persian. Art-literature as it is understood today, does not seem to have gone beyond early lispings except for a few good compilations on music. Art-literature of the kind produced by Ruskin, Wainright and Pater is unknown to Urdu; and Urdu cannot boast of a William Hazlitt or a Renan, not to mention modern critics, for "criticism" is still either in its crudest form or absent.

A very exceptionable style of writing has recently come into existence and although not in favour is secretly admired; that is the style of writing difficult Persian with Urdu verbs; but it is only the extreme case of decadence of Urdu, and a correct conception of Urdu composition is not foreign to rising authors.

Looking at the bulk of the works that have come into existence in so short a period, one really begins to wonder how the seemingly impossible has been achieved. Urdu, though perhaps the youngest of all the languages of the world, has already established itself sufficiently to bear a comparison with any language of the world except Sanskrit, Arabic, and German. It is no more scientifically formed than English or Bengali. It has grown out of a chaotic mass of dialects and highly refined languages more or less in the same way as English. It has, however, made a most phenomenal progress during a very short time. But it has had a few unmistakable advantages. It is said that no language except Greek has been formed without pattern. Nearly all the languages of Europe developed on the pattern of Latin, each

being the developed form of one of the various dialects into which Latin had broken up. Thus, the younger languages have the advantage of the experience of those which have preceded them. Now Urdu had the whole of the Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic literature to feed upon. Once it had passed the precarious condition of the early Hindi, and emerged out of the misty dawn of juvenility it found the best genius of the Hindu and the Muslim to carry it shoulder-high, in triumph from one year's end to the other, and its literature grew up with a rapidity which is amazing.

Delhi may or may not have been the actual birth-place of Urdu, but it certainly became its congenial nursery. When the court of Delhi declined and the star of the Nawabs of Oudh was in the ascendant, the men of letters flocked to Lucknow; and the language which had reached its maturity in the Diwan-i-Khas of Delhi, went visiting the court of Lucknow, where it was received with decorum which was its due, and Insha and Sauda, Nasikh and Atash, to mention only the most prominent names out of countless other names of authors and poets of the day, brought it to a perfection, which was peculiar to the execution of those days.

It must have been made abundantly clear from what has been written above that Urdu is as much the repository of the genius of various languages as it is the reflex of various civilizations. As a symbol of the characteristic culture for which it stands it represents the *ne plus ultra* of oriental

refinement. Only those who are fully-conversant with what is best in Urdu can appreciate the remark that in point of refined social intercourse no type, not even the French or the Persian, has touched a higher level. All the rarefied genius of so many different civilizations meets in perfect harmony in Urdu, representing a culture which is destined to play an important role in the history of mankind.

A jargon, which began as a crude but far-reaching compromise between different races meeting at the rendezvous of soldiers and civilians, has acquired the exalted dignity of a refined language, and, further, is the formula of an eclectic but exceptionally elaborate culture today.

K. M. MUNSHI

In the month of April 1935 I accompanied Gandhiji to Indore where he was to preside over the *Hindi Sahitya Sammelan*. I then realized the strength of the movement which Gandhiji was sponsoring for a national language for India. He inspired the *Hindi Sammelan* and guided the *Dakshina Hindi Prachar Sabha*, which was doing splendid work in South India.

A bitter controversy had been raging then in the United Provinces between the protagonists of Sanskritic Hindi and Persianised Urdu, and even those who did not know the merits of the question entered the lists with the fury of ignorance.

But really speaking, Hindi and Urdu were not different languages. Leaving aside the small educated section, the people of the United Provinces spoke only one language in which the Sanskritic, Persian and the local elements were found in varying degrees. He who used a larger proportion of Persian words, was said to speak Urdu. He who used a larger proportion of Sanskritic or local words, was said to speak Hindi. The man in the street used only the words common to ordinary human intercourse, irrespective of the source from which they come. This living language was styled by the census officers as Hindustani, by the

Hindus as Hindi, and by the Muslims as Urdu.

Dr. Hutton in the Census Report says:

"In the case of the spoken language admittedly the use of the terms Hindi and Urdu give rise to embittered controversy between two schools which are, generally speaking, coterminus with Hinduism and Islam in religion. In point of practice, it is impossible to define any boundary between Urdu and Hindi, as spoken, since the difference consists merely in a preference for a Persian or for a Sanskrit vocabulary, and as an illiterate man uses only the language of common speech, it is, generally, the bias of the enumerator, which would determine the category of his return."

For centuries, a form of Hindi with a vocabulary of predominantly Sanskritic words, had been the language of literature. Even Muslim authors like Malik Mahomed Jayasi, Abdul Rahim Khanakhana, the Minister of Emperor Akbar, and Yari Saheb had enriched it. When modern education was introduced and Hindu authors began to produce literature, naturally they turned to the resources of this language and of Sanskrit. The result was that their language largely came under the influence of Sanskrit. This was the literary Hindi of today. It could easily be understood in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Bengal and Central Provinces. It could be followed to some extent by persons whose mother-tongue was Kannada, Telugu or Malayalam, and who had studied a little Hindi.

The Hindi which was spoken in the army of the Moghul Emperors came to be called Urdu. It

differed from Hindustani or the literary Hindi, in so far as it possessed a larger stock of words of Persian origin. In modern times, when Muslim literary men began to compose literature, they naturally turned for inspiration to the Persian and Arabic literature, which were easily accessible to them. In the result, the literary Urdu became Persianised and drifted away from Hindustani and literary Hindi. This language was used and understood only by a section of Hindus and Muslims in the United Provinces and learned Muslims in other provinces. To those outside, who could easily understand literary Hindi or Hindustani, it was far from easily comprehensible.

The evolution of Sanskritic literary Hindi and Persianised literary Urdu was a natural growth in which neither hostility nor communalism entered in the earlier stages. It was not easy to arrest this growth. If a Hindi writer wrote a love lyric or a historical romance he could only seek inspiration from Jayadev, Vyas or Valmiki; if a Muslim writer pursued the literary art, to whom would he go, in the ordinary course, except to Sa'di and Hafiz?

These two currents would not meet till Hindustani, the medium of intercourse in the United Provinces, became sufficiently enriched to be the language of literature. If Hindi and Urdu works are translated or transcribed into each other freely, this result would be easily achieved.

Before the British came, Hindu writers did not hesitate to use Persian words, and Muslim

writers had no distaste for Sanskritic words. Unfortunately for us, political and religious distrust have led the Hindu writer to eschew Persian words and the Muslim writer to avoid Sanskrit words. If the writers of both the communities use the best words irrespective of their source, the gulf between Sanskritic Hindi and Persianised Urdu would be easily bridged. This question is a part of the larger Hindu-Muslim problem and will be solved only when the Hindus and the Mussalmans evolve harmony by close social and cultural contact.

A variety of Hindustani was spoken by Muslims in different provinces outside the United Provinces. It approached Urdu in Hyderabad (Deccan), was more or less Gujarati and Marathi in Maharashtra. I had also heard its Kannada variety in the Bijapur Jail. In the same way when men and women tried to acquire Hindustani as a national language, they only fitted the Sanskritic elements of their own mother-tongue into the framework of Hindi grammatical forms.

The problem of Script

Looking to all the experiments in the evolution of a national language, it was clear that the Hindustani which was the medium of intercourse in the United Provinces was a language by itself. It was a living mother-tongue and it was not and could not be a living language for the whole of India.

But outside the United Provinces, Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province, the national

language was a language, the content of which was Sanskritic and the formal structure Hindi. Social intercourse in these provinces, therefore, would always be through the mother-tongue; our creative art would only express itself through it. But as the forces of Nationalism became more powerful, as Science continued to bring different parts of India closer, as the culture and life of the country became uniform, this national language would become more and more a living language. But it could never be nor was it intended to be a substitute for the mother-tongue. When this national language became the language of intercourse for the whole of India, its vocabulary would become enriched and comprehensive. It would also acquire many European words. Perhaps, decades hence, when social intercourse between Indians became closer, all these elements would have been harmonized and a living national language born. Then the controversy between Urdu and Hindi, and between Sanskrit and Persian would have faded away.

In this connection the question of script was very important. If we had one script in the provinces in which Bengali, Hindi, Marathi and Gujarati are spoken, the residents of all these provinces would be able to read works easily in all the four languages. In other provinces, people who could read the national language would also be able to understand these works. This script could only be the Devanagari.

The difference of opinion on this subject

between the Hindus and Muslims had to be taken note of. It was no use hoping that the Muslims would abandon the Urdu script and accept ours. The Hindus themselves even had not got one script between them. How then was it possible to teach Devanagari and Urdu to all educated persons? The only practical solution of the problem was that Devanagari should be accepted by those who could do so easily. Then the only question left would be whether the compromise between Devanagari and Urdu should be effected by a use of two optional scripts or by the adoption of a common Roman script. Even today the Gujaratis write Devanagari without the top strokes. The little change which some five or six letters had undergone in the Gujarati alphabet could easily be removed. Many Hindi and Marathi-speaking persons used the alphabet without the top strokes and if such a change was accepted by different provinces, a great advance could be achieved.

These problems may be presented from the statistical point of view, according to the census of 1931.

1.	Those who use Indian languages in India	34,98,88,000
2.	(*a*) Those who speak languages of the Sanskritic family	25,37,12,000
	(*b*) Those whose mother tongue is Hindustani ..	12,02,39,000
	(*c*) Those who can easily understand Hindi - Hindustani	11,00,00,000

	(*d*) Those who speak languages which are generally written in the Devanagari script	11,11,29,000
	(*e*) Those who speak languages which are written in some form of Devanagari	9,33,51,000
3.	Those who speak Dravidian languages with Sanskritic predominance	4,67,18,000
4.	Those who speak Dravidian languages mixed with Sanskrit	2,14,12,000

From another point of view, the question may be presented in this way: Out of 10,000 men in India:

(*a*) 9,982 speak Indian languages;
(*b*) 7,235 speak languages of the Sanskritic family, the literature and vocabulary of which have been shaped mainly by Sanskrit;
(*c*) 4,053 of these use languages which are written in the Devanagari script;
(*d*) 2,662 use languages which are written in some form of Devanagari, that is, in all 6,715 persons can easily accept the Devanagari script.

In the nature of things, the medium for the commonwealth of Indian literature can only be based on an element common to all the languages of the Sanskritic family, and to the Dravidian langu-

ages which are dominated by Sanskrit, fitted into framework of Hindustani. Through this language, the literature of all provinces and of Urdu can be brought into an inter-provincial exchange; and every provincial as well as Urdu literature can draw upon it as much as it likes; and in the end the literature and culture of India would attain harmony. This would be the field of activity for an All-India *Sahitya Parishad*. To draw the wealth collected in this exchange into Urdu and to bring Urdu literature to this exchange must be the principal function of the Hindustani Associations of the United Provinces.

But all these activities left the field of the provincial *Parishads* untouched. Social intercourse and creative art were only possible through the medium of the mother-tongue. Other languages were like stepmothers; they could not give form to the true vision of beauty which a literary man might have. A national language, and the bringing about of commonwealth of literatures fell within the province of distribution, whereas creative art was a matter of production and could only be done through the medium of the mother-tongue. Facility of distribution might stimulate production; and the exigencies of distribution might determine the nature of production; but the true secret of production was the richness and fertility of the soil, of the mother-tongue. Whoever served his own language would truly serve the commonwealth of literature; whoever helped to build up a national language and literature, would ensure

the growth of his mother-tongue. India was a nation, it throbbed with the impulse of becoming harmonious; its literary men had been dreaming of one language, one script and one literature as they never did before. This situation raised before every literary man in the country a vista of unending development and growth.

A little memorandum written by me in English headed "Towards a Commonwealth of Provincial Literature in India" was circulated among literary men in the country.

It began :—

"Of late, literary consciousness has grown in every province in India which possesses a distinctive language. This consciousness has led to the birth of numerous literary associations in each province with a federal body at the top known as the *Sahitya Parishad* of that language. But generally these associations pursue the path of provincial isolation."

* * * *

But Nationalism dominates the present and will continue to dominate the future. All provincial effort will continue to find increased self-fulfilment in a greater national unity; and a commonwealth of literatures, to which each Indian province will have contributed its best and noblest will be a necessary attribute of India, if she is to attain the full stature of nationhood. But such a commonwealth can only be rendered possible through the medium of Hindi and implies a

co-ordinated effort on the part of literary men from all provinces. When this result is achieved, we would have laid the foundation of a Federation of Provincial *Sahitya Parishad*—in fact, an All-India *Sahitya Parishad*. I have cherished this idea since 1925 when I came to be actively associated with the Gujrati *Sahitya Parishad*.

The proposal met with a good response, and a monthly magazine, *Hans*, was started under the joint editorship of the late Mr. Premchand, the great Hindi novelist, and myself. Blessed by Gandhiji and associated with the name of a Hindi and a Gujarati novelist, it was a success from the start.

It filled a great void. Many authors in several parts of India came together in its pages for the first time. But after a brilliant career of about a year, it had to be stopped as the Collector of Benares demanded security from us. Even this literary magazine was found too dangerous. Gandhiji would not brook the idea of depositing security.

Some time later, Kakasaheb Kalelkar and myself busied ourselves with starting the *Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad* as envisaged in my memorandum. But the country was not ripe for such a Federal Literary Association.

AMARANATHA JHA

Thanks to our political leaders, the question of a common language for India is assuming dangerous proportions and threatens to add one more to the numerous apples of discord in this country. Like many others of our problems, this also is fast becoming a communal problem. And in my judgment there is no reason whatever why it should be allowed to come so prominently to figure in the discussions and controversies of the day. So far as the bulk of the population is concerned—the masses for whom the leaders speak—the problem just does not exist. In the villages—or to use a more fashionable Latinised expression, in the rural areas—there are no differences in the spoken language. In the Panjab, everyone speaks Panjabi; in Bombay, they speak either Marathi or Gujrati; in Bengal, everyone speaks Bengali; in Madras, they speak either Tamil, or Telugu, Canarese, or Malayalam. In the Western U. P. everyone speaks Urdu; in the Eastern U. P. and Bihar, everyone speaks Hindi. Even in small local tracts, there is no difference; in Tirhut, Brahmans, Kayasthas, Mussalmans, all alike speak Maithili; in Oudh, Hindus and Muslims alike speak Avadhi. What, then, is the reason for arousing bitter communal and religious passions in conse-

quence of which Urdu is approximating to Arabic and Hindi to Sanskrit? In the cities, too, the problem is not one that concerns the market place or the drawing-room. It is a problem of Federal India; it is a problem of inter-provincial conferences; it is a problem of the Central Assembly and the Federal Court. But it serves no useful purpose to magnify its importance, and actually it has created much bitterness and antagonism. What are the facts? India is as vast as Europe without Russia. The problem of language is no more complex here than in Europe. As a competent scholar puts it, "If we set over against the Sanskrit and Indo-Aryan the Classical and Romance languages, against the Munda and Dravidian the Celtic and Teutonic, against the Iranian, the Baltic and Slav, against the Tibeto-Burman, the Finno-Ugrian and Turkish, we have not much left on either side."

I cannot speak of South India, but in Eastern, Western, and Northern India, the modern languages were not, until quite recent times, used for higher intellectual purposes. Proverbs, religious songs, love-lyrics—these exhausted for the most part the literary content of the vernaculars until about two hundred and fifty years ago. The function of higher intellectual expression and intercourse was performed in Sanskrit which was understood by all educated Hindus throughout the length and breadth of India, whether Aryans or Dravidians. The earlier Buddhistic and Jain literature too was in Sanskrit. The same function, in the case of Musalmans and such Hindus (notably

Kashmiris, Kayasthas, and Khattris) as grew up around the Court or held offices in the administration, was performed by Arabic or Persian.

The modern languages began to grow in importance after the decision in 1837 to replace Persian by the provincial language as the language of the law-courts. That was looked upon by the Mohammadans as a serious blow to their prestige as the erstwhile rulers of the country. They have not been able to reconcile themselves to the position of equality to which all the languages were reduced and to the loss of the dominant place which Persian and Persian culture had while India was under Muslim rule. Not a voice was raised against the growth, development, and prosperity of the other languages of the country. Bengali, Gujrati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Canarese, Malayalam, were all allowed to rise to their full height. The Muslims of Bengal, Madras and Bombay were free to contribute to the progress of the languages of their provinces. But whenever, in Bihar, the United Provinces, and the Panjab, any attempt has been made to advance the cause of Hindi, there has been violent opposition from the Muslims and also from those Hindus who had battened under Muslim patronage. This attitude of active hostility has grown to such an extent that a reaction has been inevitable, and even Kayasthas, Kashmiris and Khattris, who used to pride themselves on their knowledge of Persian and Arabic and on their complete ignorance of Sanskrit and Hindi, have felt compelled to teach their children Hindi in pre-

ference to Urdu.

I devote a good deal of time to the study of Urdu; most of the leading Urdu writers of today are personally known to me; I have attempted critical estimates of several living Urdu poets. I have despite this come to the deliberate conclusion that the entire atmosphere and genius of Urdu is foreign and not Indian. The proof of it is that even a Hindu, brought up on Hindu legend and mythology and in the Hindu religion, will when writing Urdu refer invariably to Nausherwan, Hatim, Shirin, Laila, Majnun, Yusuf, and never, except for the sake of archaic flavour, to Yudhishthir, Bhim, Savitri, Damayanti, Krishna, and others familiar to him from infancy. No Hindu, however deeply versed in Persian lore, however fully saturated with the spirit of Persian, is above accepting with pleasure a Muhammadan's praise at being almost "ahle-zaban", to the manner born. Yet one more proof: In the Farhang-e-Asafia, a Urdu Dictionary recently compiled in the Deccan, there are 7,000 Arabic words, 6,500 Persian words, and only 500 Sanskrit words. The metrical forms in Urdu that are in use are not Indian but Persian. The plural forms in Urdu are not in accordance with Indian usage but with the rules of Persian.

That Urdu is the special preserve of the Muslims and that it is un-Indian—are the two arguments that are responsible for its comparative neglect by the Hindus. It is a question of reciprocity. Urdu and Hindi have been subjects of study for the B. A. and M. A. degrees at Allahabad for about

fifteen years now. Hundreds of Hindu lads have offered Urdu for their B. A. and a fairly large number for the M. A. But not even one Muslim student has offered Hindi either for the B. A. or for the M. A. Each time someone speaks for Hindi he is alleged to have injured Urdu. If I have a *mushaira* at my house I am only supposed to be doing what is right and proper; but if there is a *kavisammelan* I am condemned as showing partiality to Hindi. If I say "Janab-e-Sadr", there is no evidence of agreeable surprise at my knowledge of a foreign idiom; should I use words of my mother-tongue and say "Sabhapati", I am criticised for injuring the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity, and employing words of a "dead" language.

This claim that Urdu is of the Muslims, the pretension that efforts to help Hindi are veiled attempts to injure the Muslims, the constant assertion that Urdu alone enshrines Muslim culture—all this is to a large extent responsible for Hindus turning more and more away from Urdu. That Urdu has eschewed even such Sanskrit words as were used by earlier Urdu writers like Meer, that Urdu has been made a reserved subject in the Hyderabad constitution and is the compulsory medium of instruction in the Osmania University, even though it is foreign to 85 per cent. of the population of the State, explains the gradual decline of its popularity, which is indicated by the fact that, whereas in 1889-99, 361 Hindi and 569 Urdu books were published, in the United Provinces in 1935-36, the numbers were 2,139 in Hindi and 252 in

Urdu. Hindi is making such phenomenal progress because Muslims have chosen to look upon it as being anti-Muslim, an attitude difficult to understand, as there is no similar antagonism against Bengali or Marathi or Gujrati. So long ago as the eighties of the last century, the late Sir Syed Ahmad Khan began this short-sighted policy which has recoiled on the head of Urdu itself. At a meeting of the Scientific Society, the late Raja Shiva Prasad made the very modest and perfectly reasonable proposal that the journals and translations published by the Society should be in Hindi also. That aroused Sir Syed's ire, and he said:

> "*Yih ek aisi tadbir hai ki Hindu Musalman men kisi tarah ittifaq nahin rah sakta. Musalman hargiz Hindi par muttafiq na honge, aur agar Hindu mustaid hue aur Hindi par israr hua to woh Urdu par muttafiq na honge, aur nateeja iska yih hoga ki Hindu alahda aur Musalman alahda ho jaenge.*"

Sir Syed's bona fides as an advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity have been questioned, for was he not eager to devise means by which the separate identity of the Musalmans could be established in every conceivable way? In "Hayate Jawed", Maulana Hali says:

> "*Hindu Musalmanon men pahle ulte aur seedhe parde ki tameez thi, magar jab se achkan ka rewaj hua, yih tameez bhi baqi nahin rahi. Isi sabab se Sir Syed ko hamesha yih khayal raha hai ki Hindostan ke Musalman bhi aur qaumon*

ki tarah apne libas men koi khusoosiyat aur mabehil imtiyaz paida karen. Aur is liye unhon ne Musalmanon ki ek muazziz tareen qaum, yane Turkon ka, libas awwal khud akhtiyar karke qaum men ek misal qayam ki, aur phir Mohammadan College ke boarderon ke liye us qaede ke muwafiq, jis par qustuntuniya ki darsgahon me amaldaramad hai, uniform ka qaeda jari karne ka irada kiya."

When a person dons the uniform of Constantinople in order to be distinguished from the Indians, his anxiety to maintain unity by means of a common language seems to be unconvincing. And what is this 'common language'? In a magazine entitled *Nausherwan*, of which the latest issue (April, 1940) is before me, an article ends with the rhetorical question:

"*Insaf se kahiye kya yih Nazeer aur Azad ki Urdu hai, ya Gangaram o Seth Jamnalal ki*"?

The obvious answer is that the only Urdu that can be called Urdu is that spoken and written by Muslims and not that used by Hindus. What is this 'common language'? That used in the Preface to the Pamphlet entitled "*Hamara Panjasala Programme*," issued recently by Jamia Millia of Delhi? Here is a specimen:

"*Do baras ke baad se Jamia ne apne buniyadi maqsad ki taraf tawajjeh ki. Arbab-e-Jamia ne siyasat ke nasheb o faraz se qata'a nazar kar ke ilmi aur ta'alimi khidmat ko apni koshishon ka markaz qarar diya aur ta'alim ke nihayat*

ma'qul intizam ke sath sath ek Shoba-e-tasneef-o-ta'leef bhi qayam kiya."

A passage in which Persian and Arabic words form about 50 p.c. of the vocabulary, except the word 'baras' there is no substantive from India, and indeed the only indigenous words are adverbs, prepositions, and verbs. This is the language for which Maulana Abdul Haq makes the preposterous claim: "*Dar asl Hindi ki taraqqi yafta shakl hi Urdu hai.*" Here is another specimen of "polished Hindi:"

> "*Is men koi kalam nahin ki Iqbal bahut baland paya sha'er azeemul martabat mufakkir the. Ba'az hazrat ko sha'ed is bat ke tasleem karne men pashopesh ho ki woh uloom-e-roohani ke muallam aur asrare-batini ke hakim bhi the. Aur unhen ruhaniyat ki gahrayiyan ma-alum aur ramuze makhfi se bakhoobhi agahi thi.*"

Where, outside of those steeped in Persian, can such passages be understood? And yet the protagonists of Urdu claim that this is the common language of India, the result of the common efforts of the Hindus and Muslims. This is claimed to be the language the component parts of which can no longer be separated-"*naqabile taqseem.*" This language can never be comprehended by more than a microscopic section of the Indian population.

* * * *

The claims of Hindi are equally untenable. The natives of other provinces, notably of Bengal,

find the genders confusing. Then during recent years the tendency of the Hindi writers has been to make their language artificial, stilted, and pedantic. They are bringing in unfamiliar, difficult, and intractable Sanskrit words. They are abandoning the plain style of the early Hindi poets and songsters. They are taking the language away from the masses from whence it grew. The simple villagers who understand Surdas, Kabir, and Tulsidas, cannot understand Nirala, Sumitranandan Pant, and Yashankar Prasad. The glory of Hindi was that it was the language of the people. Even its classics were read and studied by the masses. Its literature maintained contact with them. There is hardly a village in the United Provinces and Western Bihar where you will not see, of an evening, a gathering of old and young, under a tree or round the fire, one person more literate than the rest, reading Hindi verses aloud—from Kabir, may be, or Surdas, or from the Ramacharitmanas—and the others taking up the chant, pausing while the verse is expounded with all the skill of the practised teacher, with much wealth of illustration and exposition. In these works there is a rare combination of sublime philosophy and familiar matter of today. That is what has made these poets' works the precious music of the nation's heart. Children and age-worn men, simple peasants in the countryside and men of light and learning, alike take delight in their verses which know no death. The peculiar feature of Hindi has been that it expresses the hopes, the longings, the dreams,

the daily concerns of the common folk, and its roots are deep down in the soil of India. It owns no extra-territorial loyalties. And it is catholic; it borrows freely, generously, from Persian, Arabic, English; it has not in the past hesitated to adapt useful words from whatsoever source they came. Latterly, however, most Hindi writers have been guilty of Sanskritising their language unnecessarily. Here is a passage which only those who are familiar with Sanskrit will understand:

> *"Shilibhut saundarya, jnan, ananda, anashwara, shabda shabda men tere ujjwal jadit himshikhara. Shubhra kalpana ki uran, bhava-bhasvara kala-rava, Hansa, ansha vani ke, teri pratibha nita nava."*

But, the answer to such a charge may well be that a literary style is bound to differ from journalese or colloquial style, that one set of words alone cannot equally and adequately express high poetic fancies and pedestrian thoughts, that philosophic-concepts and scientific truths can only be expressed by words borrowed from the classics. The names of new objects and conceptions have in the past been borrowed from Sanskrit. Dr. F. W. Thomas rightly points out that not only the Indo-Aryan, but even the Dravidian languages are as much affected by Sanskrit and its derivatives as is English by the classical languages, in the case of Malayalam, perhaps even more. All the languages, except Urdu, go to Sanskrit as the store out of which words are to be taken out for higher

intellectual purposes. These words will be understood all over India. If a new word is coined on the basis of Sanskrit, it will be comprehended in the areas where Bengali or Marathi or Gujrati, Tamil, Telugu, Canarese, or Malayalam is spoken. Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Dr. Zakir Husain realise this when they in their broadcast talks recommend Sanskritised Hindustani for Madras, Bengal and Bombay. (Incidentally, the former may be interested to know that at the Delhi Studio his name is pronounced as "Rajindra Purshad"). That is the reason why I think that if any language of Indian origin has any chance of becoming the common language of the whole country it must be one which is predominantly Sanskritic. Even the *Hindustan Times*, which professes to worship on the shrine of Hindustani and therefore took me seriously to task for having ventured to remain outside the charmed circle of its worshippers, felt constrained to admit that the common language of India would be predominantly Sanskritic "because the religious affiliation of the majority of the population is closely connected with that language." The official organ of the Delhi Anjuman Taraqqi-i-Urdu, in its leading article, on October, 1, 1939 (not 'Ek October', nor 'Pahli October', but "*ekum October*"), criticised me for making that statement in these words:

> "*Hindi, Hindustani, aur Urdu ki bahas ne idhar chand sal se jo rukh akhteyar kiya hai, agar use dekh kar Professor Jha ke dil men yih umang uthi hai to hamare khyal men unki yih ummid bahut hi mauhum hai kyonki kisi jiti jagti zaban*

ko mitana, aur uski jagah par ek murda zaban ko, jiska rewaj us ki zindgi men mulk ke ek chhote se hisse tak mahdood tha, assarenaw rayaj karna, maheenon aur barson ka bhi nahin, sadiyon ka kam hai, aur duniya ki raftar ko dekhte hue to Hindustan men ab is ki koi tawaqqo nahin pai jati ki mustaqbil ki sadiyan mahaz khandar dhone men sarf ki jayengi."

It is difficult to have any patience with this kind of ignorant and prejudiced and deliberately misleading criticism. In the address which this editorial criticised I had said that Urdu cannot be allowed to suffer, as it was bound to suffer if "Hindustani" was to be created. I had said that Urdu has a great literature; it contains treasures one would not willingly let die; round it have grown up valuable associations. I am still unrepentant and repeat that the only language that at any future time has any chance of becoming an all-India language will be that which borrows freely from Sanskrit.

* * * *

"Hindustani" has no future before it. It has begun ill. It has antagonised all sections of writers. The protagonists of Urdu have no use for it, unless it is identical with Urdu; the journal, *Hamari Zaban*, says:

"*Agar is men sahal Urdu ke siwa dusre anasir shamil kiye gaye to na sirf is ka chalna mumkin na hoga, balki jo thora bahut rawaj is ko milega woh mulk men aur fasad paida karega.*"

In other words it must be the pure cream of Persian, containing words and phrases so easily understood throughout the length and breadth of India, as these all culled from the same editorial article of this journal—

> *"mumtaz ohdadaran-e-riyasat"; "raunaq afroz"; "taweel taqreer"; "mushtarka zaban"; "ilm-bardaron ko"; "shadeed mazahmaton"; "maqoo-lon"; "naqabil-e-taqseem majmue"; "tahzeeb o tamaddun"; "makhsoos"; "qadeem tareekh aur waseeh adab ki hamil theen"; "zahanat"; "Farsi asarat ghalib the"; "adabi khususiyat" "(talmee-hat waghairah)"; "tarjeeh"; "makhooz"; "hairat angez kamyabi"; "irtekab"; "hasbe zail"; "taraqqi pasand musannefeen"; "tahrrek ki mukhalifat par kamarbasta hai"; "mazeed taraqqi me koshan hai"; "shukook aur be-etmadi"; "har Sahib faham"; "is aqeede ka ailan"; "sar-parastana rawaiya".*

That this view is not unfounded is borne out by the fact that when the All-India Radio desired to educate public opinion on the subject of a common language, the persons invited by it to broadcast were Dr. Abdul Haq, Dr. Tarachand, Dr. Zakir Hussain, Pandit Brijmohan Dattatreya, Mr. Asaf Ali and Dr. Rajendra Prasad, of six, only one, the last knowing Hindi, and even he intimately associated with the well-known Congress policy relating to Hindustani. It could not discover a single Hindi man of letters. It had a notorious Urdu propagandist, but no worker in the cause of

Hindi. Another circumstance that has aroused the suspicions of Hindi writers is the fact that under the auspices of the Congress, a species of mongrel language is published in the Devanagari script; this bastard appears only in Nagari form, in Urdu it retains its purity. *Roshni* was an organ of the Bihar Government, printed for the villagers both in Urdu and in Devanagari. Here is a specimen of the "Hindustani" intended for the consumption of the "peasants and workers" of Bihar; I am quoting it exactly as it is printed in the Devanagari script in the issue of November 21, 1939:

> *"Khuda School mazkoor ki Inspectress sahiba wa jammeya afsaran wa Doctor Mahmood Sahib ka donon jahan men rutba baland kare jinhon ne mere muhalle men bhi Night Class qayam kar ke ham gharibon ko rat ko fursat ke mauqe men jamaye haiwaniyat utarkar jamaye insaniyat se arasta hone ka mauqa baksha."*

This "Hindustani" cannot be understood even by the Muslims residing in the Bihar villages, and certainly not by the Hindus who form more than 85 per cent. of the population.

Recently, a writer in the *Leader* pointed out that the policy in regard to Hindustani, as followed by the Congress is doing much harm to Hindi. He said, "referring to the Urdu and Hindi versions of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's Presidential Address: "The Urdu address is faultless, elegant, chaste Urdu. But let one read the Hindi version, halting, unnatural, spurious." He has quoted

some instances to show that while the Urdu version is in pure Urdu, the Devanagari version has a large admixture of Persian and Arabic words and a perfectly unnatural combination of words. The Nagari version has such a monstrosity as "*Samata ke ussol*" "*hamare dainik jeewan ki beshumar haqiqaton.*"

One further circumstance has to be noted. When, speaking at Gwalior some months ago, I said that in seeking to abolish Hindi and Urdu in an attempt to invent a new language, its promoters will be faced with numerous obstacles, the *Bombay Chronicle*, commenting on my remarks said: "Nobody has proposed any such mad thing as the abolition of Hindi and Urdu." It is risky to argue with a newspaper and the last word is always with the Editor. But perhaps the readers may like to know that the Radio Stations at Lucknow and Delhi never use the words Hindi and Urdu. The P.E.N. (of India) has columns devoted to Assamese, Gujrati, Kanarese, etc., but only to "Hindi-Urdu", as though Hindi and Urdu Literatures were identical and separately less significant and important than Assamese! Then *New Indian Literature*, which is "edited by a Board of representative writers in the major languages," and which has representatives of Bengali, Gujrati, etc. has no representative either of Hindi or of Urdu, but of Hindustani. These are danger signals, a little cloud out of the sea, as small as a man's hand. It should be heeded. No community, no province will be willing to abandon its language and adopt another in its

place. With it are bound up its most cherished traditions; in it are enshrined its choicest heritage. Its sounds are sweeter than the Hybla bees. It will not be bound in the fetters of an unknown tongue.

* * * *

For international purposes, English is indispensable. Hitherto English has been the language of our legislatures, and our High Courts. However much we may resent the fact, the Indian National Congress could not have met first except under the unifying influence of English. Pherozeshah Mehta, Surendranath Banerji, Bepin Chandra Pal, Dadabhai Naoroji, Gokhale, could not have stirred all-India except with the aid of English. Indians have for about a century acquired a valuable knowledge of this language and the leaders can use it with ease. It cannot be the language of the masses; but for the Central Legislature and Federal Court and other inter-provincial gatherings it can continue so long as it has continued to be a convenient medium of expression. While it is no longer the ambition of any Indian that he will achieve eminence as a writer of English, yet our debt to it is incalculable in its contribution to the development of our sense of nationhood. The ideas of freedom, of responsible government, of democracy, were all derived from the writings of Burke, Godwin, Mill, Shelley, Swinburne, Morley, and others whose writings are an expression of faith in progress, in advance, and in the ultimate

triumph of freedom's battle. In the use—or misuse—of English, all Indians are at an equal advantage or disadvantage. No Madrasi need be in danger of being ridiculed by the natives of Delhi and Lucknow; no Bengali need fear his ignorance of the gender.

C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR

There is no dispute over the question of Hindustani being the national language for India. The only dispute is, first, as regards its name; secondly, as regards the script to be used; and thirdly, as regards the kind of words that should be used in the language.

It does not matter by what name we call the language, provided we all understand what we mean by the name. Whether English should be called 'Anglaise' or 'Angrezi' or 'Inglistani' is not a serious question. Similarly whether we should use the term 'Hindi,' which was the name used during Moghal times, or the longer word 'Hindustani,' or the word 'Urdu' is not of any material importance. It seems to me that the word Hindustani is likely to be more popular than either of the other two names and will give rise to the least objection. The best way to popularise a name is to use it, and not to seek to prevent others from using any other name they choose. A custom cannot be built by argument or opposition, but only by positive usage.

No script need be imposed on anyone. Children should be left to learn any script that their parents may choose. It is difficult to rewrite old literature in any new script that we may now decide

to accept. It is easier to do propaganda for a national language, if we let the script used for the local language to be used for the national language also. Devanagari is the script already in use for Marathi and Hindi, and for Sanskrit in all the provinces. It has advantages. In spite of this, however, the Persian script used in the Punjab and the United Provinces for Urdu need not be sought to be replaced. From the point of view of national unity it would be a good thing to let both the Devanagari and Urdu scripts be used without comment or objection. Far from being a hindrance, the same language written in two scripts may be an additional means of realising unity.

Thirdly, a rich language possesses more than one word for the same thought. A national language belonging to forty crores of people is bound to hold in its vocabulary a variety of terms which may be handled by a speaker or writer according to his desire and sense of rhythm and beauty of style. Words derived from Persian or Arabic and words derived from Sanskrit and words marked original Hindi in the dictionaries are *all* necessary to make a language rich. We do disservice to the language by placing any particular word under a ban. It must be left to the speaker or the writer to choose, for instance, to say "I know it" or "I perceive it" or "I am sensible of it" or "I have an understanding of it" or "I have a knowledge of it." A man may say "I gave him this piece of land", or he may say "I donated this field to him" or "I transferred the ownership of this property to him."

A calm consideration of the requirements of a language to be used in all departments of life by a variety of people counting as many as forty crores will show that it is absurd to look upon particular words as making up the language and to oppose the use of any other words. The choice of words should be entirely a matter of judgment as to the purpose in hand, and the shade of thought to be conveyed, and the requirements of rhythm and style.

From the aforesaid analysis it follows, in my opinion, that there is nothing to quarrel about over the national language for India. Whatever disputes are maintained in the North over 'Hindi' and 'Urdu', obstructs and delays the spread of either, if indeed they are two different languages, in Southern India. A common cause is likely to be spoiled by a quarrel over nothing which is unfortunately kept going among patriots.

TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

Fifty years ago I did not find much difference between the language written or spoken by the Hindus and the Mohamedans in these provinces, or in the Punjab and in parts of Bihar. It is during the last 30 years that a tendency has grown among the Hindus to stuff that language with difficult and out-of-the-way Sanskrit words. Similarly a tendency has grown among the Mohamedans particularly in the Punjab and in the Deccan to stuff it with Arabic and Persian words. If this tendency goes on I fear the time is not distant when the Hindus will have a language of their own and the Muslims will have another language of their own, and as language is so intimately connected with culture in its different aspects I fear we must be prepared for the growth of two conflicting cultures. I hold very strongly that words which have become assimilated to the genius of the language must be retained in it whether they are derived from Arabic, Persian or Sanskrit and I see no justification whatsoever for driving out those foreign words such as English or French which by constant use have become a part and parcel of our language. This is how Urdu has grown and this is how Urdu can grow in future. It is said, however, that what men like me call Urdu is not understood

in the villages. Perhaps it is true that in the Eastern districts there is a larger percentage of Sanskrit words to be found in the spoken or written language just as in the Western districts there is a larger percentage of Arabic and Persian words to be found in the written and spoken language. If you were to ask an ordinary Indian in the Western districts whether a particular word is Arabic or Persian he will probably say he does not know. He looks upon that word as his own. I believe the growth of Urdu was in the 17th and the 18th century a natural sequence of the commingling of the Hindus and the Mohamedans in Northern India. It was a necessity of the situation. It toned down mutual differences and enabled the Hindus to understand the Muslims and the Muslims to understand the Hindus. In place of this language we are evolving at the present moment a language which we call 'Hindustani'. In my opinion this is merely a cover for uprooting the Urdu language and replacing words which have become quite assimilated by purely Sanskrit words. It is to this that I have very serious objection. I do not know why we should hanker after making this language a 'national' language. I should be content if it continued to occupy the position which it has occupied during the last 200 years in Northern India. The Telugu, the Tamil, the Gujrati and the Bengali are as much Indian languages as Hindi. I should most strongly resent if I was asked in these Provinces to educate my children in Telugu, Tamil, Gujrati or Bengali.

GHULAM-US-SAIYIDAIN

The question of a common national language for India, like all other questions which relate to this vast country as a whole, bristles with many difficulties and it has been further complicated by irrelevant prejudices, misunderstandings and obstinacies. Some people, who are either pessimists or maliciously inclined, think that there can be no common language for this country, inhabited as it is by diverse linguistic groups. Their position, however, is not supported either by the facts of history or by the laws which govern the development of languages. Language is, after all, the means of expressing and exchanging ideas and when groups of people come together and are compelled, by the needs of every day life, to have social intercourse with one another they naturally develop a common medium of expression. Even small countries like the British Isles or France could not at one time boast of having a common language. But, with the growth of communications and more frequent contacts amongst people living in different parts of the country, a common language was evolved as a matter of course. There is no reason, therefore, to think that India is doomed, merely because of its size and variety, to be deprived of the advantages of a common language.

The question may, however, be raised: If it is true that a common language develops almost inevitably as a result of growing contacts and intercourse, why did India fail to evolve such a language so far? The reason is not far to seek. In the past geographical distances stood in the way of intimate and frequent contact amongst people living in various parts of the country and, therefore, the conditions favourable to the growth of a universal common language did not exist. But now that Science has conquered distances and rapid means of communication have made travel quicker and more frequent, the situation is much more favourable to the development of such a language. In the past, too, in one sense, there *has* always been some common language. In the period preceding the British rule, Persian served as a common language, but it was confined to a comparatively small section of the people: Government servants, court circles, educated classes i.e., to those who had inter-provincial contacts or, for some other reason, *needed a common language*. Even now we have a common language for the educated classes—English, and if national life could be confined within the narrow boundaries of the interests and problems of this educated minority, English could perhaps continue to discharge this function. It would be educationally unsound and politically objectionable but it would be a conceivable proposition. But the technical and scientific developments to which I have referred above, have brought in their wake far reaching social and poli-

tical changes and knit the people of all countries into a closer and more inter-dependent unity than was the case ever before. It has given them increased political consciousness and stimulated the need and the desire for studying and understanding the problems of all sections and classes of the people. The growth of democratic institutions has brought the long neglected "common man" into the picture and the political rights as well as the cultural and educational facilities, which were at one time limited to the higher classes, have now to be extended for his benefit. Today, he needs a common language just as emphatically as the educated minority did in the past, because he has to play his part in shaping the policy and programme of national life. Under these new circumstances—social, political and scientific—a new impulse has been given to the movement for a common language, and, as education and communications develop, this irresistible tendency cannot be checked.

It cannot be *checked*, certainly, but it can be easily side-tracked, delayed or diverted into wrong channels if political passions and communal prejudices are allowed to mar the natural course of events. Granted that a common language can be developed, the question is: What *should* this language be? "Should" is rather a dubious word in this context, for the question does not permit the introduction of any personal preference in the matter. If I have a special weakness for English or Pashto or Chinese, I cannot very well argue that it should be made the common language of

the country. Perhaps a better way of putting this question would be: What *can* this language be i.e., taking the existing facts into consideration, what language has a reasonable chance of becoming, in due course, the common language of the country? Now, it is obvious that the first condition which such a language should fulfil is that it should already be the spoken language of the largest linguistic group in the country. Bengali, Tamil and Gujrati are, for example, fully developed and progressive languages but they are strictly confined to certain geographical areas and are spoken by comparatively small sections of the people. These languages can therefore, have no likelihood of becoming the common language, whatever their partisans might, in the fulness of their affection, contend. On the other hand, "Hindustani" is a language which even now is spoken and understood by much more than half the total population of India and in point of popularity and range, no other language can compete with it. Some idea of its popularity, even in provinces where there are other fully developed local languages, can be gained from the replies received by the All India Radio Bombay to the question: In what language do you prefer to listen—in to broadcasts? Leaving aside those who preferred English, the following table summarizes the replies:—

Hindustani	2567
Gujrati	1742
Marathi	1559

In other words, even in a non-Hindustani speaking province, over 40% preferred to listen—in to Hindustani broadcasts. In reply to the further question: If broadcasts were made in *one* language only, what language would you prefer? 3650 gave Hindustani as their choice against 1755 who voted in favour of Gujrati and Marathi put together, thus giving Hindustani a 70% majority. Of the Calcutta listeners, 3559 voted in favour of Hindustani and 399 in favour of Bengali. Of the Madras listeners, 3525 voted in favour of Hindustani and 613 in favour of Tamil and Telugu put together. Considering the recent growth of intense provincialism and linguistic prejudices, these figures give eloquent testimony in favour of Hindustani as the lingua franca for India.

That brings me to the last aspect of the problem which is at once the most controversial and most overlaid with misrepresentations and prejudices. What is this "Hindustani?" Some people allege that there is no such language that it is a name invented by certain propagandists as a smoke screen to hide their sinister purpose of imposing some language of their own choice on an unwary people. The advocates of Urdu are afraid of waking up one morning to find that Hindi has been imposed on them. The advocates of Hindi are apprehensive of finding Urdu being enthroned as India's common language under the guise of Hindustani. There are others who want to confuse it with Sanskritized Hindi as it has developed in recent years. There are still others, purists,

who are not prepared to forego anything of what they consider to be pure Hindi or pure Urdu in the interest of evolution of a common language. I feel that no language can have the least chance of becoming the common language of India which is not the product of the cultural contact of the two major communities, the Hindus and the Muslims, and to which both have not contributed in full measure. The Hindustani language fulfils the two requisite conditions—it is spoken and understood all over India and is the result of the commingling of two linguistic traditions, the Sanskrit and the Persian. Hindus and Muslims, living together for centuries and engaged in common social and economic activities, have evolved this rich, pliable and sensitive medium of expression for their every-day use. It has great vigour, too, because it has grown, not in the comparatively anaemic atmosphere of the court and the academies, but in the villages and the market place and has enshrined the folklore, the poetry and the sentiments of common men and women. The caustic critic may ask: why not then take courage in both hands and call it Urdu or (according to the personal predilection of the critic) Hindi? Well, Hindustani cannot be called Hindi because modern Hindi which often eschews common Arabic and Persian words in its attempt to be "pure" is not the spoken language of any considerable section of the people and it does not fulfil the condition of being the product of Hindu Muslim cooperation. It is much nearer to Urdu certainly, which is the common heritage

of the Hindus and the Muslims, and whatever narrow-minded Hindus or Muslims might say, no one can honestly deny the prominent part played by Hindu writers and poets in developing and enriching the Urdu language. Moreover, Urdu throughout its history has been a very hospitable language, borrowing large-heartedly from all relevant sources and thereby enriching its content and expressiveness. But, because of its literary associations, it is often apt to be rather overweighted with Persian and Arabic words some of which have not passed into common currency. There is a welcome tendency, however—even amongst some of those writers who at one time favoured the ornate, highflown style—towards greater lucidity and simplicity and bringing the written language nearer to the spoken language. There is greater readiness, amongst the progressive writers, to borrow from Hindi and, if communal prejudices had not come in the way, the process of fusion between Hindi and Urdu would have progressed more quickly and smoothly. There is, in any case, a large common ground between Hindi and Urdu: not, indeed between the artificial Hindi which is being manufactured by some anti-nationalist circles which are anxious to purge it of all that it has gained in the past from Arabic and Persian sources, and the stilted Urdu which certain ill-advised, purist writers affect, using imposing words of Persian and Arabic origin, even where equally good and simple words of Indian origin are available, but between Urdu and Hindi as they had been normally develop-

ing during the last few centuries. In the earlier days of the Khilafat and the non-cooperation movements, when there was a welcome cooperation between the Hindus and the Muslims for common objectives, and political workers were anxious to make themselves understood by the largest number of people, this process of unconscious, inevitable fusion went on much quicker. Later developments have had the effect of giving it a setback but it will be unwarranted pessimism to regard it as a permanent failure. Those who are acquainted with the psychology of linguistic development should feel reassured to think that when the present bitterness and conflicts blow over, this process must resume its working. Another factor, to which I have already referred and which will powerfully aid this process, is the irresistible widening of political life which has brought the "masses" into the political ken. It is no longer possible for gentlemen-politicians to play at politics and confine their speeches and propaganda to select cliques of their own. They have to spread their net wider and speak to the millions who live in villages and work at the plough and do not understand the refined, polished and often bookish and artificial language of their leaders. They are nearer to earth and so is their language—it is natural, realistic, vigorous and simple like the earth itself which, after all, is a good touch-stone for things that have a survival value. When, with the development of political life, this touchstone begins to function properly, spoken language and newspaper

language will, at any rate, revert to natural simplicity and words which are being forcibly thrust in, or thrust out of language will find their true place outside or inside the vocabulary of India's common language. It will not, indeed, replace literary Urdu or literary Hindi, for, poetry and literature—like genius—have their own laws and no particular style or type of language can be forced on the poet, the novelist or the thinker. But for ordinary, everyday purposes of conversation and communication of ideas in print, there *is* the nucleus of a common language, Hindustani, which is near enough to earlier Hindi and nearer to simple Urdu and which can, and will, be developed to cement the bonds which unite the people of this great land. It is for our writers, speakers and teachers who hold the future of India dear, to strive for bringing about this consummation.

SUMITTRANANDAN PANT

Educated people in this country are generally agreed that India needs a national language. The necessity for one language has become clearer as the sentiment for national independence has gathered strength. But how far is this problem, which has taken the form of Hindi-Urdu or Hindustani controversy, capable of solution in the present state of affairs has not yet been clearly considered.

Indeed it seems strange that in spite of the presence of several highly developed languages and literatures, such as Bengali, Gujrati, Marathi and those of the South, the problem of a national language should have become identified with the Hindi-Urdu question and its manifold complications. Why this is so requires careful thought.

There are two main reasons for it.

1. The fact that with the exception of the Dravidian languages all the other provincial languages of India are derived from Sanskrit.
2. The coming into open conflict of the old and hitherto dormant antipathies between Hindu and Muslim cultures, owing to the growth of political consciousness in the country generally.

It is important to note that such provincial languages as Marathi, Gujrati and Bengali represent basically the same culture as is represented by Hindi, since they are all derived directly from Sanskrit. It is therefore natural that there is no serious opposition from these languages to Hindi becoming the national language. Bengali being somewhat more advanced than the other provincial languages offered some resistance and asserted its own claims for being recognised as the common language. But the wide popularity and comparative simplicity of Hindi, coupled with the numerical strength of the Hindi-speaking population and the difficulties connected with Bengali pronunciation, soon threw the claims of Bengali into the background. Urdu, however, has its roots in Persian and Arabic and is the medium of a different culture. It is precisely for this reason that the question of Urdu has become an almost insurmountable barrier in the path of a national language. In reality therefore the mutual opposition of Hindi and Urdu reflects the conflict of two separate cultures, which finds expression in various spheres of our national life.

Ignoring the cultural differences that exist between the Hindus and the Muslims, our politicians have offered an easy solution to the problem of language in the form of Hindustani, which claims to synthesise Hindi and Urdu. Such thoughtless solutions have had no more success than the attempts of the Indian National Congress to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity. The reasons for this

are as follows:—

1. According to the science of phonetics there is a sharp difference between the sound values of Sanskrit and the sound values of Arabic and Persian; consequently the same difference exists between Hindi and Urdu. If the subtlety of music and the charm of cadence are the mainstay of the poetry and creative literature of any language, then from the point of view of phonetics a hybrid Hindustani composed of Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic elements, can never be a vehicle for the highest poetical expression.

2. Even in the case of prose, as soon as we travel beyond the confines of ordinary speech or simple narratives and stories, we have to draw upon Sanskrit, Arabic or Persian if we want to write anything serious or critical. If the words of Sanskrit, Arabic or Persian origins are taken out of our language, the residue might well serve our conversational and other ordinary needs, but would be wholly inadequate for literary or scientific expression. Nor would it provide speech for the characters of Kalidas and Bhavbhuti or for Ghalib and Zauq. Such a language will be wholly incapable of expressing the minds of Iqbal or Rabindranath and would also be of no use to scientists, historians and politicians.

Under the present circumstances, therefore, it would seem that the best course is to let Hindi and Urdu retain their separate identity. In the meantime the Hindi-knowing people should try to improve their knowledge of Urdu, as those know-

ing Urdu should learn more of Hindi. It is futile to raise the question of one national language until the Hindus and the Muslims have achieved cultural homogeneity by being incorporated into a higher and wider culture, which would arise only after the conquest of political freedom.

It would thus appear that in our country the problem of linguistic unity is a part of the larger problem of cultural unity. Not only India, but the entire world will be called upon to revise its cultural values in the near future. Ours is a scientific and philosophic age.

It is the age of the fulfilment of machinery, of its beauty and of its transformation of the face of the world. Machinery has annihilated distance and has brought together conflicting races, cultures and peoples. In order to establish a scientific and human civilization, the different countries and nationalities of the world will have to alter their cultural bases very substantially. This cultural reconstruction will lead to the establishment of a world socialist order in which the cultures of various peoples will be in the nature of national manifestations of certain basic common values. Under that world civilization, based as it will be on fundamentally different social conditions, the Hindu and Muslim cultures shall lose their separate identities and become one. Then alone will real Hindu-Muslim unity be achieved both on the cultural and the political plain, and then alone will it be possible to have a common language for the country.

The future national language of India will, however, have in it a large element of Sanskrit, whose beauty and music will inspire the writers of the entire country, excepting perhaps those of the South. But the new language will be very different from the ancient Sanskrit in spirit. It will have nothing of the decadent subtlety and limited vision of the individualism of the feudal age. It will be on the other hand a robust, dynamic and socially useful medium of thought and expression, borrowing freely from Arabic, Persian and other languages without in any way marring the music and beauty of its vibrant life. It will lose its religious character by ceasing to reflect the individualism of the Hindu religion, and will in this sense come nearer to the Muslim culture. Indeed it will become the vehicle of a healthy humanism.

Such a national language will be one of the major factors cementing the economic and social life of the country. And when it has acquired that status, it will be studied with as much fondness and pride by all as English, a foreign language, is being studied today.

It is possible that after a few centuries when socialism and the development of machine civilization have done away with the desirability of retaining separate national cultures, humanity may attempt to evolve an international language. For, the world order of the future will pull down the artificial barriers between man and man, thus creating the need of another language which will adequately satisfy the new requirements of human life.

For the present, however, let us not forget that the problem of our national language is intimately connected with the problem of our cultural unity. This unity will come about only after our political emancipation and will be based upon socialism and the achievements of machinery and not on the time-worn ideals of ages past, which have no significance today. Indeed the future of humanity rests with science, machinery and the socialist reconstruction of life.

MOHAMMAD DIN TASEER

The ideal is that there should be only one language in the world. But the facts are that (leaving the world alone) from the very early period of the linguistic history of India there were at least two sets of dialects, even amongst the so-called Indo-Aryan language-group. Previous to that were the Austric languages and the Dravidian languages. The Dravidian drove out the Austric, but the pre-Dravidian vocabulary survives even today. The Indo-Aryan pushed the Dravidian into the South, and though the Dravidian linguistic influence has declined in the North, it has an integral life in the South. These are almost prehistoric matters. Sanskrit, be it noted, was born, bred and matured outside India. Persian, its collateral, had an independent history of its own. But the off-spring of these long-parted sisters joined hands at last in India. And, whereas the alphabet of Sanskrit is Semitic (South-Arabian) in origin, Persian reverted to a revised Arabic script centuries later. So much for unity and variety. And yet with all this profusion of languages, covering all groups, our masses are ignorant and uneducated.

It is a very complicated situation. Add to it the political, social, economic and religious entangle-

ments. And behind this chaotic scene are the invisible wire-pullers, the powerful foreign and native exploiters, who are busy day and night, piping and wooing, inciting and coercing, conducting a puppet-show of their own machinations.

It is pointless, therefore, to indúlge in an abstract discussion on unity and nationalism. The linguistic situation presents a concrete problem, in a concrete setting. We should deal with it in a concrete manner.

First of all there is the Urdu-Hindi antagonism. It is no use saying that it does not exist *anywhere*, that it is a creation of vested interests. It exists *everywhere*. It is, no doubt, a creation of foreign rule and vested interests. So are most of our troubles. But it is a creation which is very much alive and kicking. We cannot end it by closing our eyes tightly and denying its existence. It has an existence in the present and a history in the past.

Before the advent of the Persian-speaking people Northern India was in a linguistic chaos. Dialects were struggling with languages. When the Central State became consolidated, the Midland Suranesi dialects, spoken roundabout Delhi, the capital of India, naturally began to gain supremacy. It was also natural that Persian words should find their way into this growing language. The Indian officials and the other educated people of the time introduced eagerly into their languages the words of the new Court language. We find the same process working today. It is the English vocabu-

lary now. It was the Persian vocabulary then. Today we laugh at the Anglicised Hindustani, and the English laugh at the "Indian English" of our babu-graduates. It was then a question of Persianized "Hindustani" and Indianized Persian. It is a well-known rule of the mixture of languages (ref. Windisch's "Zur Theorien der Mischsprachen und Lehnworter") that "it is not the foreign language the nation learns that it turns into a mixed language, but that its own native language becomes mixed under the influence of the foreign language." It is not a question of political pressure. It is a linguistic law. We find that in the French writings of the German king, Frederick the Great, there is not a single word of German, but his German was full of French words and phrases. The same was true of the Indian educated classes in the times of the Afghans and Moghuls. The masses, however, did not use this inflated vocabulary. A few political, judicial, and court words of Persian sufficed for their needs. (Even Tamil has these Persian words). But the Suranesi dialect spread far and wide, until it became the lingua franca of Central and Northern India, and was understood even in the towns and cities of Southern India and Eastern Bengal. It became "Hindustani" and was the spoken language of the Moghul Emperors and Nawabs. The last King of Delhi and the last Ruler of Oudh, both composed huge volumes of verses in this common language of the Hindus and Moslems. But I am forgetting the new forces at work. The rulers of Fort William were watch-

ing this amalgamation very keenly. Let me quote the words of Sir Charles James Lyall, K.C.S.I., C.I.E. "The Hindi form of Hindustani," writes he, "was *invented* simultaneously with Urdu prose by the teachers at Fort William. It was intended to be a Hindustani for the use of Hindus.....;" one brand for the Hindus, another for the Moslems. It has been so, ever since.

I know the impatient comments this will excite. Why not rejoin these separated paths? It is more easily said than done.

But as it is, this is not the only point of disunion in India. Culture itself is a superstructure, and language is a minor part, a mere expression of that superstructure. (Europe has a certain unity of culture with all its disparity of languages). Our disparities are not caused by our difficulties in languages.

This bifurcation of Hindustani into "Urdu" and "Hindi" is really a sign of the times. As long as Urdu (Hindustani) remained the spoken language and the vehicle of poetry and simple prose there were no differences. But as the language grew up and began to incorporate higher learning, translations of scientific books, etc., the question of technical terms and abstract nouns became important. There was no central organisation to meet the situation. Readymade terms from Arabic and Persian (both living languages) were borrowed and adapted *ad hoc*. As Persian was no longer the Court language, and Hindustani was not the medium of instruction, this Persianized Urdu be

G. D. NAIDU,
U. M. S., COIMBATORE.

came a highly artificial language, understood only by a few. The Fort William "teachers" had taught only too well. A new version of Hindustani, with Sanskrit (a dead but "sacred" language) as its mainspring, came into existence. The growing nationalism of the Hindus led them to Hindi, and the Moslems carried on with Urdu. These two versions of the same language are now in a state of adolescence, with all the characteristic virtues and vices, bickerings and vanities. They seem to have parted for good, at least amongst the learned circles.

Should they be brought back and unified? Perhaps it would be better to change "should" into "could". That would be a more realistic way of looking at the problem. But even if we discuss it in an abstract way, there appears to be no necessity for trying to reverse the historical process.

Then how can you conduct a united national struggle when you have more than one language? This is the question which agitates the minds of those who advocate one language for the whole of India. But the words "language" and "nation" are not co-extensive. We have Afghanistan with two languages and one nation. Switzerland has four languages. (The small canton of Berne alone has two languages and two religions). And there are Britain and the U.S.A. with one language and two nations. Nor should the question of administration alone frighten us. Canada and the Union of South Africa, no bigger than our various

provinces, are getting along quite well with two languages each. We should not forget that languages, much more so scripts, are only symbols of thought. They are only meant to convey the Idea. The shibboleth of the symbol should not be worshipped for its own sake. Our aim is to educate the masses on the right lines, to communicate with them in the easiest possible manner, in the languages nearest to them, their mother-tongues. We want to prepare them for the struggle for freedom. It will require a good many years to make one common language and then teach it to the illiterate millions of India. Surely you are not going to wait for freedom until then? And once you have freedom you need not worry about the language problem. Divergence of languages will not be politically harmful then, for, you will have no vested interests to exploit differences. The same is true of culture. Divergence of language groups does not destroy the integrity of culture, nor does the divergence of culture cancel the integrity of the national struggle for freedom. The aim only lends content to the forms of language, literature and culture. And the languages, literatures and cultures of India give a variety of form to the content of the struggle for freedom from exploitation.

I go a step further and say that as long as India is not free any attempt to break the linguistic or cultural integrity of important groups is both impossible and harmful. It will give a handle to the vested interests and confuse the masses. Our

policy should be to strengthen the existing language groups, write the right sort of books in various languages and propagate the spirit of freedom through them.

Nor should we bewilder the masses by trying to teach them additional languages and new scripts. The majority of them are illiterate. They have no incentive for learning a language which is not their mother tongue. If they try to learn more than one script or language it will be easier for them to lapse into illiteracy, even if we manage to educate them up to the primary standard. And the primary standard does not teach even one language in a proper manner. When we are free, when we are richer, we can afford the luxury of teaching many languages to one person. It is no use wasting money, energy and time over this tedious process now. We should not forget that we have wary enemies, watching us all the time. The Urdu-Hindi (and the Hindi-Tamil) controversies have already achieved alarming proportions.

Then what is the solution? We have before us the example of the U. S. S. R. It is not necessary to be a Communist to learn from this great Socialist federation, how to tackle the problem of divergent cultures and languages. Before the Revolution, the Czars tried to "russify" the whole empire. The Russian language was taught compulsorily wherever there were schools and consequently the Caucasian and Central Asiatic countries remained backward. The Eskimos, of course, were treated as the Bhils are treated now in India.

Then came the Revolution, the dictatorship of one class, one ideology, the equalitarian state. The idea of "National culture" was regarded by Lenin as a purely bourgeois idea. But he also said that linguistic, national and state distinctions "will exist for a very long time even after the dictatorship of the proletariat on a *world* scale." Dealing with diverging languages, etc., he realised that the policy of one language, the scheme of "russification" was an Imperialist idea. The uniformity of ideology did not require the uniformity of language. Why draw a red herring across the path of freedom? And today we find that in the U. S. S. R. schools of the first grade alone are run in sixty-six different languages. The Russian Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Eastern languages has created alphabets, grammars, and dictionaries, where none existed (e.g. Eskimos, Uzbeks). The aim is literacy, not the learning of some particular language. The backward areas receive three times more money per capita for education than the R. S. F. S. R. (Russia proper), with the result that a country where literacy figures were almost as low as in India, is now one of the most advanced countries in the world, at least educationally. To quote Hans and Hessen, the well-known anti-Communist White Russian professors: "in spite of the partisan character of the education imparted, the national renaissance of all Russian minorities is an actual fact which brings with itself immense possibilities in the future."

The Indian situation is very much like that of

Czarist Russia. The successful experiment of the U. S. S. R. shows to us the obvious way out.

This does not mean that the use and advancement of an existing language which is commonly understood in the bazars of India should be discouraged. The diverging development of Hindi and Urdu has made it both impossible and undesirable that these languages should be replaced by the Hindustani that was *once* a budding language and well on its way to becoming the *lingua franca* of at least Northern India. Nor should this newly revised Hindustani be forced on the Dravidian speaking people. It is so futile and mischievous. On the other hand the various languages of India should be encouraged in their development so that they become perfect vehicles for the expression of advanced political, scientific and literary ideas.

I am afraid some of our enthusiastic nationalists have formed a false idea of what they consider to be the cause of Indian freedom. They forget that even nationalism is not the end but the means to a higher ideal—the achievement of the freedom of Man.

The following quotations speak for themselves:—

1. *Associated Press, Nagpur, September 30th*, 1938:—

"The (Central Provinces) Assembly devoted the whole day to a discussion of an amendment seeking to add 'Urdu or Hindustani' in the definition of a recognised language which according to the draft assembly rule

as it stands at present means Hindi or Marhatti...Almost all members from the opposition benches spoke in favour of the amendment...and asked the Congress Ministry not to hesitate in giving effect to the Karachi Congress resolution dealing with the protection of minorities, their language and culture if the Congress desired to win over the confidence and goodwill of the Muslims of the province.

The Finance Minister, on behalf of the Congress Government opposed the amendment. He said that those who had refused to accept the Congress as a national organisation could not draw the Congress Government's attention to the Karachi resolution on minorities...He appealed to Muslim members to ponder over the question and said that a minority had not the right of imposing unreasonable demands on a majority in the house. Those Muslim members who so desired already enjoyed the privilege of speaking in Urdu, but he felt that the production of these speeches in Urdu was not a feasible proposition."

2. Babu Sampurnanand, Education Minister, replying to a welcome address by the Nagri Pracharni Sabha at Benares, advised them thus:—

"If we want Hindi, which is also called Hindustani, to be learnt easily by our South Indian countrymen, it is essential that we

should use a sufficient number of *Sanskrit* words in the Hindi language."

This does not lead directly either to the popularisation of the cause of Hindustani or to the achievement of freedom for India.

But what is Hindustani? Says Gandhiji (Associated Press, Bombay, October 20th, 1938):—

"So far as Congress is concerned, Hindustani is its recognised official language, designed as an All-India language for inter-provincial contact. The Hindi-Urdu controversy has no bottom. The Hindustani of the Congress conception has yet to be crystallised into shape. It will not be so long as Congress proceedings are not conducted exclusively in Hindustani.....Hindustani spoken to a Bengali or Southern audience will naturally have a large stock of words of Sanskrit origin. The same speech delivered in the Panjab will have a large admixture of words of Arabic or Persian origin."

If Hindustani is yet to be crystallised, the Hindustani with varying vocabulary to suit different provinces, then why start making it compulsory now and that, too, in a province where it is a foreign language? Why not name these variants plainly as Hindi and Urdu? Why should the non-Sanskrit Dravidians and Sanskrit Bengalis both have Sanskritized Hindustani? Why not wait until this language *does* crystallise? But Gandhiji does not differentiate between "is" and "is to be."

Said he on September 10, 1938: "There is nothing wrong in making a knowledge of Hindustani compulsory if we are sincere in our declarations that Hindustani is or is to be the *Rashtra bhasha*." Then comes the argument: "Latin was and probably is compulsory in English schools. Its study did not interfere with the study of English. On the contrary English was enriched by a knowledge of the noble language." This may satisfy the Dravidian language-group but I am afraid I cannot make a jump long enough to cover the distance between an "uncrystallised language" and "a noble language," a fact and a wish.

Hindustani, the basic language which has yet to be formed definitively, is not a noble language, nor is it meant to, nor can it enrich the full grown languages of India—Urdu, Tamil, Bengali, Hindi, etc. It should be based upon the bazar speech of the towns of India, and the folk-speech dialects of the villages of Northern India.

Let me set forth a concrete line of procedure:—

We call a basic-language committee composed mainly of young writers and linguists. (N. B. "young" refers to mind and not to age. I did not use the word "progressive" because it may have a certain fixed connotation). They first make a list of basic words semantically necessary. Given this list of referrent ideo-symbols, we proceed to the philological side. We take Fallon's English-Hindustani Dictionary as our basis. Three Urdu knowing members, from different parts of India, say the Panjab, U. P. and Hyderabad, who do not

know any Hindi, but know their local rural dialects, make a list of all the non-Persian words that they understand and, likewise, three Hindi knowing members who do not know any Urdu, make a list of non-Sanskrit words. This basic philological list should then be compared with the basic semantic list. In those cases where the basic semantic ideo-symbols have no corresponding symbol-words in the Urdu-Hindi lists, equivalents should be given from both the languages. This should form our basic dictionary. Let me give an example:—

Suppose in your basic list of semantic words (ideo-symbols)—you can prepare it in any language, preferably English—there is the entry "North" and you find that in your philological list there is no common Urdu-Hindi word for it, that neither "shamal" nor "uttar" is included, then you will enter these two words together: *shamal, uttar*. There is no need to make polite compromises for the avoidance of such variants. Only those words which are familiar to both non-Hindi knowing Urdu people, and non-Urdu knowing Hindi people, should be included without variants. The whole work should be carried out realistically, factually and not wishfully. Compromise can be made later on, if it is unavoidable. Of course when there is a common philological word for a basic semantic word (ideo-symbol), e.g., *Inqilab* for Revolution, *Samaj* for society, there is no need for entering variants. In the case of familiar synonyms to select the one which is more commonly in use in

classics of the past.

This basic dictionary can be amplified later by the collection of vocabulary from folk speech-classics, like "Ala Oodal," "Hir Ranjah," and literary speech-classics like the later dramas of Hashar and other playwrights. Reports of *Kisan* and *Mazdoor* public meetings, as well as gramophone records of everyday speech can form another source of vocabulary. Later on special vocabularies of professional and political words and of other ideo-categories could be collected. But the method should be the same as that proposed for the formation of the first basic dictionary double lists, philological and semantic (ideo-symbols, in any language), elimination by comparison.

This enlarged dictionary should be published in Urdu and Hindi scripts together, and in the Latin script separately. The Urdu and Hindi publication will be a good guide for the various writers in these languages who want to write in a simpler style but cannot because of various speech-habits. The Latin-script version will be useful for various group-leaders in the Congress and other inter-provincial political organizations who do mass-contact work.

I will not indulge in any involved discussion of the script-problem. The Latin, Nagri and Urdu scripts all have their good points and shortcomings. Latin and Nagri have separate scripts for writing and printing and that is an unnecessary complexity. The Urdu script has dicritical marks and that, too, is equally confusing. These ideo-sym-

bols are not important in themselves. They are just vehicles for ideas. In the present state of our development we need the knowledge of, at least, one European language and therefore familiarity with the Latin script is a necessity for our leaders. This Hindustani should in the first instance become the language of our group-leaders. It should afterwards or simultaneously be carried over to the masses. This should be done primarily through speech-mediums, e. g. radio, talkies, gramophone records, and touring theatres. Primers, books and illustrated magazines can follow later on.

We could start with making the knowledge of Hindustani—after we have formulated a handbook of vocabulary and elementary grammar—compulsory for Congress delegates and all others who take a leading part in inter-provincial political organizations, as strictly as Congress makes the wearing of hand-spun khaddar compulsory. Thus this Hindustani may be, at the beginning, the ear-language of all, and the eye-language of only a few. But the masses should not be compelled to learn it, particularly at this stage when we have not "crystallised" even the elements of Hindustani. The adoption of Sanskrit and Persian variants suggested by Gandhiji will, apart from creating misunderstandings, make the formation of a real basic language even more difficult than it is at this stage. The consolidation of these variants by usage will create another obstacle in the way of Hindustani proper. These variants are, as stated

before, not very different from the colloquial Urdu and Hindi.

Let us learn at least one lesson from the U. S. S. R. May I repeat again that the words "language" and "nation" are not co-extensive, that our aim is to propagate ideas and not force upon people uniformity of form or a set of particular ideo-symbols. And the ideal is that there should be one language for the whole of the world. The immediate aim is the removal of all forms of exploitation by vested interest.

BASHIR AHMAD

The question of a national language for India is intimately connected with the Indian national problem. The solution of the one would lead to the solution of the other. The day Indians agree whole-heartedly on the question of a national language, the political problem itself would be solved to a great extent. Hence the fundamental importance of the settlement of the language question. Those who have faith in Indian unity must, therefore, direct all their energy to the fulfilment of this task.

Let us face realities. It is a fact that within the Indian sub-continent there are so many conflicting parties and interests that the disruptive forces sometimes seem to overwhelm the forces making for union. Here there are two major communities, Hindus and Muslims, who have, admittedly, some vital differences between them. Whatever may be said by those who indulge in wishful thinking it is a fact that the Hindu-Muslim problem today is unsolved and apparently almost insoluble.

The same state of affairs is reflected in the problem of language. Urdu and Hindi are the two aspirants for the position of the national language. Urdu is backed up mostly by the Muslims and Hindi by most of the Hindus. Both these commu-

nities and both these languages have drifted apart and unfortunately the estrangement is greater today than ever before.

Why? A brief historical survey will provide the answer.

For centuries during the medieval period the religions, cultures and languages of the Hindus and the Muslims influenced and interacted on each other. So far as language was concerned, although Persian remained the official court language, yet the influence of time and the mutual good relations of the two communities gradually brought into being, at least in the greater part of the country, a common language which, at various stages of its career, became known as Hindi, the language of Hindustan, Rekhta, Hindustani, Urdu-i-moalla and finally Urdu.

Urdu was and has been an admixture of words deriving their origin mostly from Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian. It has, besides, followed an open door policy and welcomed words from any and everywhere. Hence its universal appeal. Urdu was a natural compromise, a natural and convenient mixture. It was the meeting-point of two civilizations. And it was a happy augury that it was named neither after the country or the religion of the rulers nor of the ruled poeple. Urdu is a neutral word, almost international in its significance.

With the advent of the British power, Persian gradually lost its predominant place. The Western rulers recognized Urdu as the natural successor, it being the language most widely understood by the

people. Thus Urdu became the court language in 1835. Not a single voice was raised against it. In fact in 1861 the Zamindars and some other inhabitants of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa submitted a memorial to the Viceroy praying that the proceedings of the newly created High Court should be conducted in Urdu. Besides this it is related that many educated Hindus whose mother tongue was not Urdu and even the British rulers used to deliver their speeches on various public occasions in Urdu. Thus Urdu gradually became popular all over the country.

But the jealous Heavens forbade its triumph, and the language question became inextricably mixed with communal considerations.

Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru says in his pamphlet, "The Question of Language":—

"It was in the second half of the nineteenth century that the words Hindi and Urdu began to signify something different from each other. This separatism grew. Probably it was a reflex of the rising national consciousness which first affected the Hindus, who began to lay stress on purer Hindi and the Devanagri Script. Nationalism was for them inevitably at the beginning a form of Hindu nationalism. A little later the Muslims slowly developed their form of nationalism, which was Muslim nationalism and this began to consider Urdu as their own particular preserve." Panditji assures us that "this separatism in language is bound to disappear with the fuller development of nationalism."

But so far the separatism has continued to grow and today the gulf is wider than ever before.

The Hindi agitation was started in Bihar in 1867; it had its second triumph in 1900 in the U. P., where through the patronage of Sir Anthony Macdonell it was made the alternative court language. The Hindi Sahitya Sammelan was founded in 1910 and since then Gandhiji has taken an active part in the Hindi campaign throughout India. The Congress passed its Hindustani Resolution in 1931, but the mischief could not be stopped. In April 1936 the first session of the Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad was held at Nagpur under the Presidentship of Mahatma Gandhi, who declared "Hindi Athwa Hindustani" as the language of the Parishad and by implication as the future language of the country. At an objection raised by Maulana Abdul Haq of the Anjuman-i-Taraqqi-i-Urdu, against the name of this newfangled artificial language, Gandhiji is stated to have dubbed Urdu as the language of the Muslims, which is written in the same script as the Quran.

This raised a storm of protest throughout the land and several Hindus including Lala Sundar Lal and Pandit Nehru strongly criticized the anti-Urdu views of Gandhiji.

Pandit Nehru wrote his famous pamphlet on the "Question of Language" in August 1937 and in the same month the Abdul Haq-Rajendra Prasad understanding regarding the language controversy was arrived at.

But the rift widened day by day. The All-

India Muslim League passed a resolution in favour of Urdu at its Lucknow Session in October 1938. Urdu day was celebrated throughout India on 18th December, and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru the new President of the Anjuman-i-Taraqqi-i-Urdu appealed to his countrymen to rally round the cause of Urdu and save this last stronghold of the common culture of the Hindus and the Muslims.

The situation worsened during the Congress regime in seven Provinces from 1937 to 1939. The Congress Governments, following the Congress Resolution of 1931, apparently supported Hindustani but really furthered the cause of Hindi in the guise of Hindustani.

What made matters much worse than would otherwise have been the case was the use of highly Sanskritized Hindi by such responsible Congressmen as Gandhiji, Sampurnanandji and others.

An All-India Urdu Conference was held at Delhi in December 1939. Gandhiji's message to the Conference showed that, while speaking on the language question, he was still thinking in communal terms, a fact pointed out by Pandit Nehru himself. It is satisfactory to note that since then Mahatmaji has corrected himself to some extent, though he still complains of the "cloud of distrust" hanging over his head. (Vide his letter dated 7.3.40 published in "Hamari Zaban" Delhi dated 1-4-40).

Unfortunately this "cloud of distrust" hangs over the whole of India at the present time and the sphere of the national language is not immune

from it.

If the Congress had taken a bold stand when it took office three years ago and had declared Urdu as the national language of India, it might, at one stroke, have solved the political problem as well. The Muslims assured of the preservation of the common Hindu-Muslim culture would have shed their suspicion of the Hindus, and a long step would surely have been taken towards the solution of the communal problem.

It is clear that Urdu has ultimately a Sanskrit and therefore a Hindu foundation, with a superstructure which is partly Muslim, and therefore it represents a just compromise between the two cultures, but the Hindi-Hindustani of Gandhiji and the vast number of his Hindu followers is bent upon treating all words of Muslim origin as untouchables. The question is whether we should adopt a language which represents only a section (even the bigger section) of the Indians or a language which combines in fair measure the original Hindu and Muslim languages? The Muslims gave up their own cultural language (Persian) and adopted Urdu (Sanskrit plus Persian), and now they are asked to give up this position as well. How can they agree? The deliberate attempts at purging modern "political" Hindi of even all popular Arabic and Persian words show that what is being aimed at is not a joint social structure but pure Hindu domination.

The Congress alone could have held the scales even. But it did not do so. Instead, it felt that it could not be "unfair" to the Hindus, who formed

the bulk of its supporters and who were being more and more attracted to their ancient Vedic culture.

The Hindus, that is a large section of them, began to entertain dreams of a Hindu revival. The rebirth of Hindi was to play an important part in this revival. Pandit Malaviya was one of the leaders of this section. Another section of the Hindus brought up in the traditions of the common Hindu-Muslim culture did not look with favour at this movement of segregation. Mughal culture still played an important part in their lives. They did not regard this culture as exclusively Muslim. Urdu was to them a symbol of this joint heritage. They did not want to give it up. Originally during the Muslim period when the Muslims mostly used Persian, it was the Hindus who helped to devise the language which was then called Hindi and which later assumed the form of Urdu. How could they then regard it as a Muslim product? Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru was the most prominent leader of this section. These liberal-minded people earnestly appealed in the name of unity to such Hindus as were still attached to Urdu to strengthen this single tie between the two major communities of India, for in it alone lay the hope of the future.

Another great force that has played a decisive part in this connection is Mahatma Gandhi. Where he appeared on the political horizon he infused new energy into the hearts, of the Indians, particularly the Hindus. He placed the old simple

Hindu ideal before them. They answered his call to action.

As we have said above Hindi was one of the planks of the Mahatma's platform. It was to be the common national language of India. Most of the Hindus followed his programme. The old Hindu-Muslim understanding was gone. The Hindus began to purge Hindi of the Arabic and Persian words that had been assimilated by it in the course of time.

The Muslims raised a communal cry to save Urdu and the culture represented by it. The Urdu-loving Hindus felt bewildered. Hindu nationalism had become identified with Hindi; what was to be their position? They mostly remained quiet. The more far-seeing among the Hindus realized that one can not obliterate the medieval period of Indian history at one stroke. The eighty millions in this country can not be ignored. One cannot go back to ancient India without dealing a death-blow to modern India. Who can put back the clock of Time? Even many English and European words have come to stay. All such naturalized foreigners should be welcomed. They have come to serve us. Let us therefore broaden our outlook on life. Let us not be narrowly national in our ideas and aspirations, let us, instead, broad-base our future on a multiplicity of cultures, ancient, medieval and modern.

If prejudices were to be set aside, Urdu with its Persian script and an even admixture of Sanskrit and other old Indian words on the one hand and

Arabic and Persian words on the other would be found to be a true exponent of this common culture.

Urdu as has now been admitted even by Gandhiji, is not the exclusive language of the Muslims. It is in fact the spoken language of the overwhelming majority of the people in Northern India. Hindi-ites like to call it Hindi. That the spoken language is not Hindi is admitted by so great an exponent and supporter of Hindi as Babu Rajendra Prasad. Presiding at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan in April 1936 he said—"the Hindi which is now-a-days used in books is the mother-tongue of very few people." "If Hindi wants to be a living language it must not adopt the principle of boycott." "The more Persian and Arabic words Hindi assimilates the greater and stronger will it become as a language." (See the Jamia-i-Millia's monthly magazine *Jamia* of May 1936). But this sound advice was not listened to and the boycott went on with even greater vigour and speed during the last 4 years. As an example witness the presidential address of Mahatma Gandhi at the Bharatya Sahitya Parishad in April 1936, the speeches of Sampurnanandji, the U. P. Congress Ex-Minister, and the presidential address of Mr. Subhash Bose at the Haripura Congress in February 1938. Even most of the Hindus would fail to understand these speeches which are full of antediluvian words. Gandhiji advocated the use of more Sanskrit words when Hindustani was to be spoken in South India and more Persian words when it was to be used in

the North. How could such a shifty language become the national language or for the matter of that any language at all?

In this manner Congress leaders continued to carry on an incessant propaganda for Hindi during the Congress regime. The self-same leaders appeared one day in the Congress and the next morning in the Hindi Conference. In the A. I. C. C. Dr. Ashraf's resolution (of September 1938), intended to prevent congressmen from espousing the cause of Hindi, was thrown out mercilessly. Communal narrow-minded was unmasked.

"Back to Ancient India" was the one slogan heard in the Congress ranks, dominated as these were by the towering personality of Gandhiji. As a result of this, many of the Congressite Muslims became disgusted with the language policy of the Congress (as see the views expressed by the "Madina" of Bijnor, a leading Congressite Muslim newspaper in its issue dated 25-4-40).

There are those who build their hopes on compromises. Some of these have already failed e.g. the U. P. Hindustani Academy. The Bihar Committee has been more promising. In this connection Maulvi Abdul Haq is working at a Hindustani Dictionary. But in the midst of the Urdu-Hindi turmoil Hindustani is faring rather badly. Each one pulls it his own way. What will be the end of this tussle? The thing seems so easy to manage and yet it has become so difficult to deal with.

The fact of the matter is that as Babu Rajendra

Prasad himself admits, modern Hindi is mostly an artificial language. It was brought into being by one Lallo Lal Ji a teacher of Fort William College at Calcutta in the beginning of the 19th century when he weeded out all commonly understood Arabic and Persian words from the Urdu books, replacing them with obsolete Sanskrit words and thus creating a new artificial language. This was modern Hindi very different from the old Hindi from which Urdu has evolved. Most of the Hindi written since then has been of this Sanskritized type and therefore static and entirely out of touch with the needs of actual life. This was the process of "Shuddi" or purification of language. The language was so pure that it was dead the moment it was born. Enormous propaganda has been carried on for this Arabic-&-Persianless edition of the Hindustani language. The Radio, the screen and all the might of the Congress Governments and Congress Committees have been used to further the cause of this new favourite.

While it may be safely asserted that a new language cannot thus be coined and forced upon the people at large, there is no doubt that modern propaganda is capable of doing much mischief. Grotesque "purisms" are being instilled daily into the ears of large audiences. (For example سوتنتر تا for آزادی , پرستاؤ for تجویز , اتتھہ for حاکم , پرسدھہ for مشہور , گھوشن for اعلان and so on).

In this connection it is interesting to refer to a remark of Pandit Nehru's that Urdu is the langu-

age of the towns and Hindi that of the villages. This remark is manifestly incorrect. As a matter of fact even fewer villagers than towns people would understand the "Hindi Athwa Hindustani" of the Mahatma. Urdu is undoubtedly the language of the towns, while the various dialects of the countryside, differing one from the other, stand nearer to Urdu than to Hindi. More Arabic and Persian words are used in the rustic tongues of Northern India than "pure" Hindi writers and speakers could ever dream of. (Vide the pro-Congress magazine *Kaleem*, of March 1938, and the Congress Urdu journal "Hindustan" dated 4th and 11th December 1938).

The fact is that Urdu is nearer to the spoken language than "Hindi". Gandhiji was taken aback when Maulana Abdul Haq once told him (in April 1936) that Urdu contained more Hindi words and idioms than Hindi itself. This is so because Urdu draws freely upon the rich stores of popular Hindi spoken by the Hindus of medieval India and also because it is in many other ways a living language. For some time in the 19th Century, Urdu too became temporarily burdened with top-heavy learned phrases. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan rescued it from that dangerous state and gave it new life.

When Hindi writers too give up their short-sighted policy of boycott of Arabic and Persian words and use more commonly understood words and phrases, Hindi will come to approximate more and more to Urdu and the twain will be nearer to a meeting-point.

Then the question of Script alone will be left, and India will either have both the scripts or adopt one which will keep her more in touch with a dozen other Oriental countries.

PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

It is too late in the day to lay open the question of a national language for India to any public discussion. It was settled so early as in 1917 and later the decision to make Hindustani the common language was ratified by the Congress. The Congress could not and did not stop till a reasonable measure of progress was attained in this behalf, before it implemented its decision which simply took effect forthwith because it was ever so natural and therefore inevitable. But as time advanced, different forms of Hindustani came into evidence. Even where you have a homogeneous province with a single language, the dialects vary from district to district, so much so that by a single syllable, at times, a trained mind is able to tell from which district the speaker hails. We were hardly able to understand the other day at Patna the wail of a woman who flung her complaint into the Working Committee's room before she could be sent away. She reappeared next day and even Rajendra Babu said that he felt it difficult to make her out.

While this is so, the rapid spread of Hindi or Hindustani throughout the country has brought into being types of languages with syntax and idiom closely modelled after the language of the

province concerned. The appropriate verbs vary considerably, while the appositional clauses are constructed in different languages in different ways. The employment of the past participle and gerundial infinitive used adjectivally is very common in Telugu while it is almost absent in Hindi-Hindustani. All the while we are talking of grammar and idiom—not the native intonation and the drawl of each province. An Andhra imports the latter freely into English which in his lips assumes a singsong tone. The Tamilian makes his n's and l's thick and doubled up as it were. The Malayali has his nasal twang which is characteristic. The Maharashtra actually wrestles with his sentenes and pulls back the last words and pushes forward the first ones in each sentence. The Gujerati is easily spotted by the soft and feminine tones that characterize his speech whether in English or Hindustani. The Bengalee converts all a's into o's—especially when they occur in the first and last syllables of a word. All these mannerisms and idiosyncrasies are equally noticeable in the Hindustani spoken by each of these language areas, so that today we have different provincial variants of the common language of India—whether judged from the standpoint of grammar or idiom or intonation.

There are a few complications again from the measure and manner in which each of these languages has assimilated the classical language of the Hindus—Sanskrit—into the provincial language. *Samsar* is a Sanskrit word which means in Telugu the

family, in North Indian Hindi it means the world, and in West India (Maharastra) both the family and the world. Again the Sanskrit word *Apavad* is used in North Indian Hindi to mean 'exception,' while in Telugu it is made to mean 'false accusation.' When this was mentioned to Swami Satyadev he pointed out, that in Hindi *Apavad* is also used sometimes to mean 'false accusation.' The two bugbears to us in the South in respect of Hindi or Hindustani are the use of the letter *ne* with the subject and the distinction of genders for words. In Telugu we have gender which is simple and the words follow the implications of sex, the inflection being the same for feminine and neuter. It is true that in Sanskrit we have gender for words and strangely enough the word *mitram*, which means a friend as well as the 'Sun', is neuter while the word *Darah* which means a wife is always plural. When we people of the South however have to learn Hindi or Hindustani we must be exempt from the tyranny of *ne* as well as of gender. In the ultimate analysis both are the same as the difficulty about the use of *ne* simply centres round the question of gender and number too. It would also be of advantage to abbreviate expression by using freely the gerund and gerundial infinitive in an adjectival sense.

Another thought that occurs to one in this connection is that Hindustani is considered—and wrongly—the mother tongue of the Mussalmans. It is not so. The thirty million Mussalmans of old Bengal (Bengal, Behar and Orissa) speak only

Bengali or some dialect of Behari or Uriya. The Mussalmans of Tamil Nadu speak Tamil and the three million Muslims of Kerala speak Malayalam. The Mussalmans of Andhra speak Hindustani as much as Telugu, but the former by preference, generally. When therefore we consider that Hindi or Hindustani is spoken by a large majority, we may not overlook this fact. Yet we must admit that Hindi or Hindustani can be the only common national language of India.

What is this Hindi or Hindustani. I am accused by many, made fun of by a few that I have got by heart a number of Persian and Arabic words which I don't know how to use. I plead guilty to the latter and admit the former. But all that I can say is all that I must say in the matter. The Hindus West of Allahabad speak in common with the Mussalmans a language which, though they call it Hindi, tends to become more and more what we should call Hindustani or *Urdu*. The renewed consciousness of each of these two great communities of their religion and separate interests—thanks to the British Government which has promulgated such a disintegration—has tended to introduce a certain divergence in the language spoken *pari passu* and the political thoughts entertained. This is unfortunate. The Hindus seem to suffuse their language with an extra measure of Sanskrit, while the Mussalmans seem to charge their mother tongue with an extra dose of Arabic and Persian. It is not after all a question of majority and minority. The total Mussalman population—about eighty

millions—may not all speak Hindustani, much less classical Hindustani, but a half of them speak *Urdu* or Hindustani, and in a country peopled by nearly 400 million, a tenth of the population counts very much and counts too for much in deciding the exact character of the national language.

The acuteness of feeling on the question of language is evidenced by the following recent interpellation and answers in the Central Legislature:

Sir Ziauddin's Questions in the Central Assembly, March 20, 1940.

Has All-India Radio abandoned the use of the word "Urdu" in its announcements and programmes as well as its publications and does it use the word "Hindustani" in its place, asked Sir Ziauddin in the Assembly today.

Sir Andrew Clow replied that the term "Hindustani" was frequently employed by All-India Radio but it was not correct to suggest that the use of the word "Urdu" had been abandoned.

Q. Is such a language as "Hindustani" in existence in India?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it the policy of All India Radio to carve out a new language for Indians in addition to Urdu and Hindi, at the expense of both these languages?

A. No. The policy of All India Radio is to endeavour, as far as possible, to use a vocabulary which is understood by the largest number of listeners.

Q. Are the Government aware that a great deal of propaganda is going on in the country for some time against the Urdu language?

A. No.

Sir Ziauddin asked if it was not Government's policy to keep neutral in such political controversies and, if so, would instructions be issued to All India Radio to observe this policy and not to spoil the Urdu language by using unfamiliar Hindi words?

Sir A. Clow. Government have no intention of taking sides in the political implications, if any, of what it regards as essentially a linguistic matter. I do not agree that the Urdu language is being spoilt by All India Radio, whose policy it has always been to avoid, as far as possible, unfamiliar words and expressions, whatever their origin.

Q. Are Government prepared to issue instructions to All India Radio to abstain from using the word "Hindustani" in place of Urdu?

A. No, for the reason I have already given.

Sir Ziauddin in the course of supplementaries asked what difference the Communications Member made between Hindi and Urdu.

Sir Andrew Clow said he thought that the All India Radio was guided by the definition given in work on the subject, that Hindustani is primarily the language of the Upper Gangetic Doab and is also the 'lingua franca' of India capable of being written in both Persian and Devanagri characters and avoiding alike excessive use of either Persian or Sanskrit words when employed in literature.

In reply to further supplementaries, Sir Andrew Clow said all living languages tended to change and he himself understood Urdu and Hindi as distinguished mainly by the extent to which they use Persian and Sanskrit words respectively.

In the midst of all these differences and difficulties—altogether bewildering even to the North Indian, what shall we, of South India do? We see gaunt despair before us—not for want of faith in the concept of or decision on the common language for India, but want of certainty and clear definition as to what language we have to learn. In Madras the Congress Government tried to evolve a language which is a synthesis of Hindi and Urdu and published readers in it. But if friends of the North quarrel between Hindi and Urdu, shall we suspend our endeavours in South India in this behalf till those of the North have composed their differences. The solution of this problem is no longer the close preserve of North India which appears to be swayed by adventitious considerations. We of the South claim to have our share and my humble but considered opinion is that besides a list of basic words, we must evolve a list of at least one thousand words and expressions which are of classical origin on either side and which must be learnt up by both Hindus and Mussalmans for half of the words are strange to either group.

We can quote many words of daily use which both the communities must learn. They may not use them both, though they may have to, for in a

large audience, it is unfair to use language which is not understood even by a single person, more so by hundreds. It is inevitable in the very nature of our conditions that the Hindus must learn at least a thousand Arabic and Persian words while the Mussalmans must learn an equal number of Sanskrit words. It is infinitely easy for them to fly away from each other and to use either highly Sanskritized Hindi or highly Arabicized or Persianized Urdu. Language however serves its purpose only when it is universal—of course universal within limitations. Our object must be to make each other understood.

DHIRENDRA VARMA

There is a well-known Hindi proverb निर्बल की जोय सारे गाँव की सरहज 'the wife of the weak is the sister-in-law of the whole village.' It denotes exactly the present-day condition of over ten crores of Hindi-speaking people in India who, though most numerous, are the least organised.

Speakers of other languages in India inhabit either in single provinces—such is the case with the Bengalis, the Assamese, and the Panjabis and will shortly be also the case with the Oriyas and the Sindhis—or they are grouped together in single administrative provinces. The latter is the situation of the speakers of Tamil and Telugu who live in the Madras Presidency; it is also that of the speakers of Marathi, Gujrati and Sindhi who form the Presidency of Bombay. The chief centre of Kanarese is Mysore, of Malayalam Malayalam Travancore, of Kashmiris Kashmir, and of Nepalis Nepal. The cooperative family of the speakers of Hindi is, however, so large that it is divided into several provinces for administrative convenience. The literary language of the people of five British provinces is Hindi, *viz*., that of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh—renamed Suba Hind by the Indian National Congress, of Behar Proper, Central Provinces, Delhi

and also that of Ajmer. Besides, the Hindi-speaking people are spread over a number of States which are grouped under two administrative agencies—the Rajputana Agency and the Central India Agency. In other words, the Hindi-speaking people occupy the mid-land (ancient Madhya-desha) of Northern India from Jaisalmir in the west, bordering on Sindh and Gujarat, to Bhagalpur in the east, bordering on Bengal, and from Haridwar in the north, bordering on the Panjab, to Bastar in the south, bordering on the Madras Presidency. The problems of such a large people must needs be manifold and complicated—they are administrative and economic, religious and social, literary and linguistic and what not. I, however, propose at present to discuss briefly some living controversies connected with Hindi language and script only.

Hindi-Urdu Controversy: Origin of Urdu and its Relation with other Hindi dialects—

The most interesting point about these recent controversies is that almost all of them owe their being to foreigners and are in no way problems arising out of the innate difficulties of the Hindi-speaking people themselves. I have used the word foreigners not necessarily in the sense of non-Indians, but chiefly for such Indians as are alien to the Hindi-speaking population either linguistically or culturally. The first and the foremost among these controversies is now generally given the name of Hindi-Urdu problem; and it has, thanks

to certain official and semi-official sympathisers, taken the form of a triangular question namely that of Hindi, Urdu and Hindustani.

To explain the genesis of this problem it would be necessary to describe briefly the circumstances in which the Urdu language has developed in our land. As is well known, Urdu is a dialect of Hindi overloaded with Persian and Arabic vocabulary and sometimes even with such grammatical forms, and its literature looks to Iran, Central Asia and Arabia for its cultural inspiration. Though the early foreign adventurers in India spoke several languages—Arabic, Pashto, Turkish, Mongolian, etc.,—the court language of the Indian rulers was Persian. Nevertheless for purposes of communication with the people of Northern India, where they founded their empires, they had to take recourse to the local Hindi dialect of the Delhi area. But this local dialect was in fact mixed with foreign vocabulary. To take an illustration हम मुसन्निफ़ीन में सब से बड़ा नुक़्स यह है कि हम लोग क़ारईन के जज़बात का अन्दाज़ह नहीं कर सकते developed in parallel circumstances in which the same idea would be expressed now by the English-educated Hindis in the words "हम writers में सब से बड़ा defect यह है कि हम लोग readers की feelings को realise नहीं कर सकते." When used for literary purposes, this mixed local dialect was written in a slightly modified form of the Arabic-Persian script, popularly called the Urdu script. Owing to political reasons this dialect assumed certain importance and was adopted by the Hindi converts to Islam living in the towns

of the Hindi-speaking area. It was next to Persian the best language for them, for the latter was more difficult to acquire. Because of practical needs, it was learnt by such Hindus as sought employment in the administration of the country. This is in brief the origin of the Urdu language.

Side by side with this semi-official foreign form of an Indian-dialect, other Hindi dialects were cultivated by the people for literary and religious purposes—the chief of these being Marwari, Braj, Awadhi and Maithili. Each had its bright days for centuries. The true national culture of the Hindis found its expression through the medium of these dialects which were used by them irrespective of religion—Raskhan wrote in standard Braj, Jayasi wrote in pure Awadhi. As long as Muslim rule lasted, Khariboli Urdu was regarded as something foreign by the Hindis and was scrupulously avoided by the people in general—official and semi-official circles being excepted. But with the disappearance of the Mughal rule from Delhi, this prejudice gradually withered away. During the nineteenth century the Hindis adopted Khariboli as their literary language, but after removing its foreign garb—namely the foreign vocabulary, the foreign script and the foreign literary ideals and thus revived it in its true local form. This is the modern Khariboli Hindi which is at present the recognized literary language of the Hindi people living in the five British provinces and the two Agencies of Indian mentioned above. We can thus, clearly understand the comparative position of Khariboli Hindi

and Khariboli Urdu.

Real Controversy Between Hindi and Urdu is Cultural—

There is, however, one noteworthy change in the present official position of Urdu. Formerly Urdu had imperial patronage, while contemporary Hindi dialects had comparatively no such advantages. In modern times Hindi and Urdu have both come to the same level in this respect. The present-day official patronage of Urdu is merely linguistic and not literary. Though bereft of imperial patronage, Urdu has got still literary votaries amongst such Hindi converts to Islam, living mostly in towns, as have lost touch with their own mother-tongues, and also by such Hindus, of earlier generations generally, as were brought up in the cultural atmosphere of the nineteenth century. The Kayasthas and the Kashmiris living in important towns of Hind are the typical representatives of the latter class; their number and strength is, however, fast declining. Moreover, though Hindi has also been recognized as the Court language, the tradition of Urdu is still continuing in the law-courts of the United Provinces. For this reason, persons connected with the law-courts of U. P. have to pick up Urdu language and script.

Owing to change in the nationality of our rulers, in modern times the prospects of Urdu are not so bright as they were before. We have seen that Urdu developed in certain special political circumstances. That situation disappeared long

ago. The religious language of our present-day rulers is Latin and not Arabic, their official language is English and not Persian, and the script which they use is Roman and not Perso-Arabic. From the practical point of view, therefore, there is no reason why Hindi people should now stick to Urdu language and script for administrative work. In the present circumstances Anglicized-Hindi and the Roman script may have a stronger case. But the essential difference between Urdu and Hindi is not that of vocabulary and script alone. As has been shown above, the naked truth is that Hindi, along with the Devanagari script, represents the national language of the Hindi people, while Urdu language and script stand for foreign culture influences. The real controversy between Hindi and Urdu is, therefore, now cultural—the administrative importance of the latter having already vanished. Consequently the solution of the controversy lies not in touching the problem of vocabulary and script, but in handling the very sources of the cultural conflict which are represented by the two languages. The real question thus before the Hindi people is whether they should stick to the national form of their language and script or to adopt a speech decorated with foreign feathers and embellishments. This question demands rational inquiry.

Why should Hindi be the provincial language of the Hindis and not Urdu?

The case of Hindi as the national language of Hindi people is based not on sentiment but on sound reasoning. By adopting Hindi, the Hindi speakers remain in close touch, on the one hand with their ancient literatures, scripts and cultures as preserved in Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit, and on the other with almost all the modern languages and literatures of India such as Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Uriya and Assamese, and even those of the south such as Tamil, Telugu, Kanarese, Malayalam and even Singhalese. All these national languages of India take their inspiration from the common Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit sources. By giving up Hindi language and script and by adopting Urdu in its place the Hindi-speaking people will have to sever their cultural connection not only with ancient India but with the rest of Modern India and may get in return only the doubtful company of a section of the Punjab, (because even in the Punjab the Sikhs are sticking to Punjabi which is the mother-tongue of the whole of the Punjabis), of the government alone of the Hyderabad state (where the people speak and cultivate their own mother-tongues which are Marathi, Telugu and Kanarese) and perhaps that of the prospective province of Sindh with a population of about thirty-five lacs only. Who will hesitate in the circumstances in making his choice?

Principle of common language or Hindustani is unsound—

The case of Hindustani is even less tenable. By Hindustani is meant an easy variety of Urdu which from its very nature is unsuitable for any high literary or scientific works. The other day Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha, the President of the Conference of the Hindustani Academy, expounded the cause of Hindustani, but his own address was in English, while the attempt of the Secretary of the Academy to write in Hindustani caused merriment alike to the Hindi and Urdu scholars assembled there. A few easy articles or stories may be written in such an artificial language or it may be used for light conversation or for primers in the lower classes—but there the bifurcation of roads begins. The fact is that, like diarchy, the principle of common language is essentially unsound and has done more harm than good. On account of this system, the students are able to master neither Hindi nor Urdu; and then, above all, it fails to solve the bilingual problem of these provinces. The earlier system of the first form and the second form was much better than the common language system. The students used to master both the languages in their pure form—one in its advanced stage and the other in its elementary form but with possibilities of future improvement on the right lines. The question of Hindustani does not, therefore, merit serious consideration.

Communal outlook about Hindi-Urdu problem—

There are certain people who look at cultural

and administrative matters from the communal point of view. They are heard to argue that as the Muslims would not like to give up Urdu, how can then the bilingual controversy of the Hindi-speaking provinces be solved? The argument has not much force in it. Firstly the question is not of giving up Urdu, but that of falling in with the national language of the Hindis. Besides, the assumptions that all Muslims living in Hindi-speaking area are speakers of Urdu or no non-Muslims speak Urdu are baseless. Of the 14% population of Muslims residing in the United Provinces—it is even less in other Hindi-speaking provinces such as Behar or Rajasthan—a very large majority lives in villages and along with their Hindu brethren naturally speaks the local dialects such as Braj, Awadhi, Bundeli, etc. The real votaries of Urdu, including both Hindus and Muslims, are therefore reduced to a handful—to people living mostly in the towns—and their number would hardly be 5% of the total population. When once the 95% Hindis have made up their mind, the remaining 5% will naturally fall in with them sooner or later.

Solution of Hindi-Urdu controversy—

All these arguments lead us only to one conclusion about our bilingual problem which, I may add, has been greatly exaggerated. The only solution lies in the awakening of the right type of nationalism amongst the Hindi-speaking people which should rally them round their national language,

Hindi, irrespective of religion, caste or class differences. Just as every Bengali, whether he be Hindu or Muslim, Brahmo or Sanatani, Brahmin or Kayasth, regards Bengali as his mother-tongue, every Frenchman, be he Christian, Jew, Muslim or even German or Englishman naturalised in France, accepts French as his national language, so should every Hindi regard his Hindi language as the national language. I hope I will not be misunderstood I am not against the study of the beautiful Urdu literature, language and script. What I object to is its rivalry with Hindi as a provincial language. By the way I may point out that even European philologists do not assign Urdu to any particular province as a mother-tongue. There should be provision for study of Urdu as an optional language from the lowest to the highest classes and those who have inclination towards it should be free to study it. Thus, what I want to emphasise is that every province in India should have only *one* recognised provincial language and script and it should be the national language and script of the province—in Hindi-speaking provinces Hindi and Devanagari, in Bengal Bengali, in Gujrat Gujarati and so on. The study of other languages—ancient and modern, Indian and foreign—should be optional. This is and should be the right place, for the study of early and modern treasures of Urdu literature.

Question of forming technical words in Hindi—

Once the above principle is understood and

adopted the question of the technical words also would not raise any difficulty. The problem has unnecessarily been exercising the minds of educationists, scholars and writers. With the rest of India, the Hindi-speaking people should also look for their technical words mainly to the Sanskrit and Prakrit sources, just as the modern European languages coin their technical words on the basis of their own classical languages. On this principle the Hindi technical words would be similar to such words in Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu, etc. On the other hand, by adopting words based on Arabic and Persian sources, Hindi would be cut off from the rest of India. It should not be forgotten that Urdu is after all only *one* of the dozen important literary languages of India. In all such problems, the practical question before the Hindi-speaking people is whether they should keep company with ten or with only one. Because of the supposed difficulty of choice between जज़ीरा and द्वीप, to adopt the word 'island' in the lower grades of educational institutions is a policy which is suicidal for both Hindi and Urdu and strikes at the very roots of our culture.

Next we might consider the position about the terminology of advanced scientific subjects. In this connection, I am reminded of a talk with a Chinese Professor of Nanking who was recently travelling with me on the same boat. In answer to my query about the solution of the problem of the scientific and technical terminology by the Chinese people he informed me that for education

up to graduate's degree they had current or coined Chinese terminology because they did not want to destroy the purity of their language. For highest classes and for researchers and specialists full freedom was given to use English terminology because this class of persons had to keep itself in constant touch with the foreign lands and their up-to-date researches. I feel that a solution on more or less similar lines is possible in our country also.

Reform of Hindi grammar—

There is another problem about Hindi language which has only recently come into the forefront. It is the question of the reformation of Hindi grammar. Besides having provincial importance Hindi language has the unique status of an inter-provincial medium for the rest of India also. When a Gujarati wants to make himself understood to a Bengali or vice versa, generally both have to take recourse to Hindi. In other words, it is the unofficial *lingua franca* of India and has already been recognized as the official inter-provincial form of speech by the Indian National Congress. With this special status are cropping up a number of complications. When the people of other provinces learn Hindi, they find certain difficulties in acquiring it—Hindi being different from their own mother tongues in several respects. To take one instance, the gender of Hindi is the greatest stumbling-block for the Bengalis who have no such system of grammatical gender in

their own language. Some time back, I read an article written by a Professor at Shantiniketan, supported by a Bengali professor of the Calcutta University suggesting that Hindi should give up all grammatical modifications in adjectives and verbs due to gender, it was only then that the Bengalis could think of accepting it as a *lingua franca* of India. Their demand was not that they should be given latitude to commit such mistakes—it was already there—what they wanted was that even Hindi-speaking people who found no difficulty in using the gender correctly, should begin to speak हाथी जाती है and लोमड़ी बोला. If such requests begin to be considered seriously, it is impossible to foretell the future of Hindi. The difficulties of a Bengali are of one type, those of a Punjabi of another type; a Tamil would find inconveniences of a different nature. Hindi language modified according to the convenience of the speakers of a dozen languages of India would be anything but Hindi. The price for raising Hindi to the status of the *lingua franca* of India would be impossible to pay, I would prefer Hindi to remain the provincial language of ten crores of Indians, with its purity intact, to making it the inter-provincial language of the remaining twenty-five crores of Indians by torturing and disfiguring it in a thousand and one ways.

The request is really peculiar. French language has almost a similar grammatical gender as Hindi. For example they would say 'le drap, the cloth' but 'la robe, the dress', or 'ma mère, my

mother' but 'mon père, my father'. This system of gender of French is a source of very great difficulty for other European peoples who recognize French as a continental language. But I have never heard that any request has ever been made to the French people to modify their language so as to fit in with the convenience of the speakers of other languages. The spelling and the grammar of English is anything but rational, but I do not know of any petitions sent from India or for that matter from the people of other nationalities such as Germans, Japanese, Persians, etc,, who learn English for commercial or other purposes suggesting that they would stick to English only when 'daughter' was written as 'doter', the past tense of 'bring' became 'bringed' and the pronoun used for ship were uniformly 'it' and never 'she'. It should be remembered that the raising of Hindi to the status of the inter-provincial language of India is owing to its natural position and importance and is dictated by the needs of the speakers of other languages. It is no favour to Hindi or to its speakers.

Which form of Hindi should be regarded standard?

An allied internal problem is about the use of Khariboli Hindi by speakers of other dialects of Hindi itself. People of Behar and Benares-Gorakhpur divisions find some difficulty in using the idiom of Delhi-Meerut side. Even the residents of Oudh sometimes bungle in the use of certain Khariboli forms. When some well-known writer of eastern Hindi area commits slips and when he

is criticized for them, he feels it a disgrace and tries to defend his use of the form or suggests that there should be laxity in the use of forms. This again is an attitude far from correct. Once the dialect of a particular tract is accepted as the literary language of a larger area, the idiom of the home of the dialect will have to be regarded as the standard. When Braj was the literary language of our country the idiom of Braj-Mandal was treated as such. Today, when Khariboli has been raised to the same status, the usage of Delhi-Meerut side should be accepted as correct in case of difference—दही अच्छा है, अच्छी नहीं है; मैंने खाया, हम नहीं खाया। Discipline is absolutely necessary for stability in the field of language, just as in all other social institutions.

Devanagari lipi and Roman script—

From the controversies of Hindi language we may pass on to some of the problems of the Devanagari script. The difficulties about the Devanagari script are also mostly due to people who use different scripts for their languages. The idea of the substitution of Urdu script has now receded into the background; its imperfections are too patent. But thanks to the growing number of English-knowing Indians, who become familiar with the Roman script from their very childhood, the question of replacing the Nagari by the Roman script comes up every now and then. Some time back I was discussing the problem with a Bengali friend of mine in a Paris Café. The congenial atmosphere of the place weakened his reserve and

he opened his mind. He said that it appeared inevitable that Hindi would become the *lingua franca* of India as it was impossible to retain English for a long time, but then why should they be burdened with a new script also? The people of Bengal already knew the Roman script. He added that it is why his people were for the acceptance of the Roman script as an inter-provincial script in India.

Now like Hindi language, the Devanagari is the national script of the Hindi people. It has got a history of at least 2,500 years behind it; it is further allied to all the other scripts of India, with the exception of the Urdu script. It is, therefore, not possible for Hindi people to substitute it in their homes by any other foreign script. It does not matter much to us whether Devanagari is accepted as an inter-provincial script or not. Suppose for a moment that by constant propaganda for about 100 years we are able to substitute the Roman script in place of the Devanagari, and suppose that by that time the British Government of India is replaced by the Government of the Japanese, we shall then have to unlearn the Roman script and to adopt the Japanese script for our nation. The ideas of unnecessarily adopting foreign institutions in place of our own are good for arm-chair politicians, a handful of cosmopolitan people or for such types of scholars as have lost their cultural moorings. How can the real people of the land think of such steps involving a veritable suicide?

Reform of the Hindi script—

The question of the reformation of the Hindi script is on a different footing but the way in which it is being approached is again ludicrous. The other day I read an article by a so-called specialist on the subject arguing that the Devanagari script needed modification because its letters did not fit in properly in the keys of the lino-type machine originally invented for the Roman script. The idea is on the same lines as if some one were to go in for a second-hand suit and if the suit did not fit the body of the person the shopman were to suggest that the form of the body was defective and needed rehauling so that it could fit in with the second-hand suit. I never heard of any movement for the reform of the Roman script—which by the way is far from perfect—for the sake of ordinary printing or lino-type. These inventions adapted themselves to the needs of the script but with us the case is argued just in the opposite way.

More recently, the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, under the presidentship of Mahatma Gandhi, has been going into the question of the reform of the Hindi script. Mahatmaji himself has not much time to go into details about such small problems and he has therefore naturally to leave them to his followers. Amongst such suggestions emanating from his advisers, the most important is to rehaul the Hindi script on the lines of the Gujrati script by giving up the line drawn above each letter which is, as is well known, the most distinctive feature of

our script. I would once more warn Hindi people not to go to other people for the solution of their difficulties. Some time back I read about an interview with Shri Rabindranath Tagore, the premier poet of Bengal. Besides several questions, the interviewer asked the great poet his opinion about the suitability of the Devanagari script as the common script of India. The report ran that the poet smiled and said 'And what about the Bengali script for this position'? I am really at a loss to understand as to why all the possible defects have suddenly developed in our script which is not much different at least from the other Indian scripts. Personally I do not feel that there are many serious defects in the Hindi script. A few minor modifications such as substitution of श for ष, the consonant रि for the vowel ऋ or the Marathi ण for ण, are a different matter.

Conclusion—

I have tried to discuss briefly some of the most important controversies about Hindi language and script which have been agitating the public mind for some time and which have recently come to the forefront. Vital changes in languages or scripts cannot be introduced suddenly and thoughtlessly specially when they are against the ancient traditions and long-cherished sentiments of the people. The examples of Turkey or Ireland on such points are illustrations of change in the direction of nationalization and not denationalization. Turkey gave up Arabic and adopted Tur-

kish as the language of the state, it gave up Arabic script and in the absence of a suitable national script adopted the Roman script. Ireland gave up English and adopted its own national speech. These analogies, therefore, cannot throw any light on our problems. As to reforms, I know that the long-established French Academy has not been able to introduce any vital modification in the French language. Above all what I would like to emphasise is that the problems connected with Hindi language and script should be examined by the Hindi people themselves and that too from the point of view of their own advantages and disadvantages. The opinion of foreigners—specially of such from our own midst who are alien culturally—should be taken with great caution. It is a warning which is perhaps not too late.

HUMAYUN KABIR

The encouragement of India-consciousness is one of our major tasks today, for on it depends the fate of the Independent Federated Republic, which is the objective of all politically conscious Indians. In a vast country like India, with races who have come in successive waves of invasion, it is inevitable that there should be divergences of race, culture and history. In spite of the fissiparous tendencies that grow out of these differences, Indian history also reveals a deep unifying spirit that expresses itself in the continual enrichment of India's civilization through the contribution which each of them successively brought. In this unifying process, a common language has been one of the most potent factors, and we find throughout Indian history the attempt to evolve such a common language.

Sanskrit, as the name itself implies, was the result of such an attempt. The word 'sanskrit' means refined or cultured and is a reminder that it was the language of the cultured all over India as opposed to the prakrit or the natural modes of speech of unlettered people in various localities. Pali, originally a prakrit dialect, grew in importance with the growth of Buddhism and perhaps for a while challenged the supremacy of Sanskrit,

but with the triumph of Hindu renaissance over Buddhism, Sanskrit came back to its own. The establishment of Afghan, and later Turkish power in Delhi led to the dethronement of Sanskrit by Persian, but its diffusion was perhaps never so great as that of Sanskrit. Nevertheless, Persian became the language of the cultured and the aristocracy over large parts of India, including areas which resisted the power of the Sultans. Urdu, the language of the camp, grew almost spontaneously. Based on a foundation of prakrit, it drew freely from saracenic sources and served as a medium of intercourse between people of different races and localities. With the advent of the British, Persian and Urdu yielded place to English as the language of culture and state craft, but this replacement is itself proof of the recognition of the need of a common speech.

The need of a common language to serve as the means of intercourse between India's different peoples with their varying divergences of race, culture and tradition is thus one of the most important lessons of Indian history, and this in spite of the fact that most of the Indian languages have great structural similarity, while the vocabulary is also in many cases common. Foreigners no doubt repeat *ad nauseam* that India is a continent with all a continent's variety of languages, but this platitude, like most platitudes, is only partially true. In spite of many superficial differences there is a fundamental unity among many of the Indian provincial languages and there is little doubt that,

but for the variation in pronunciation, intonation and accent, this similarity would reveal itself even to a casual observer.

Nevertheless, the superficial differences have obtruded upon the consciousness to the exclusion of the fundamental unity. In the past, difficulties of communication tended to enhance these distinctions. Today, facilities of intercourse have grown and the result is the enormous growth and diffusion of English. In spite of drawbacks from which perhaps both Sanskrit and Persian and certainly Urdu were free, it has spread far more than any of the common languages of the past. So intimately has it entered into the texture of our life that we find a school of thought which believes that India cannot, now or ever, do without the English language. They point, and with a great deal of justice, to its enormous contribution to the evolution of an Indian nationhood. It has brought to India, on a wider scale than perhaps ever before, a common speech and the common habits of thought that go with common speech. It is the symbol of a common economic bondage and political fate.

Even the struggle for economic and political freedom bears this out. Till very recently, politically vocal and indeed politically conscious India was English speaking India and perhaps it is so even today. In the Congress and other political institutions of an all-India character, deliberations are even today almost invariably carried on in English. Till very recently, the speeches which

were best understood and most appreciated were those delivered in this language of the foreigner. Indeed, one could go further and say that speeches might sometimes be delivered in the mother tongue, but even then, they were merely Indian translitterations of English speech. The ideas and the frame of mind, the concepts discussed and the feelings expressed, even the structure of the sentences were often English in inspiration, though the words used were Indian in origin.

With the insight of genius, Gandhiji saw that the tyranny of a foreign language must be removed before India could achieve her economic, political and cultural freedom. Independence could be won only through the energy of a resurgent mass and the only way of rousing them and bringing them into the movement was to appeal to them in the mother tongue. With the transformation of the Congress into a revolutionary mass organisation pledged to complete independence, the problem of a common Indian language has once again come to the front.

English has no doubt contributed to this end, for the present wide, even if shallow, diffusion of English has resulted in a profound stirring of the depths of Indian life. Its age-long inertia has been so shaken that experiments in new ways of life have become possible. Conservatism or reformism cannot perhaps be condemned or commended in the abstract, but in a country like India, immobile under the burdens of an immemorial past, anything that tends to disturb the immobility

is a factor of progress. But the corollary to this gain was a growing divergence between the educated and the uneducated, and a bifurcation of Indian national life that weakened the struggle for political freedom itself.

The dominance of English contained the seeds of an even greater danger. It condemned to perpetual illiteracy a majority of the Indian people and threatened to create a situation in which passion and prejudice would be the dominant force. It was sheer phantasy to expect that India's three hundred and more millions would or could ever accept English as their common speech. Facilities of communication and its character as the court language have no doubt helped English to achieve its present position in India, but perhaps even more important was its adoption as the medium of instruction in all but the primary stage. This was politically conditioned and yet it has had repercussions far beyond the normal sphere of politics.

All educationists agree that working in a foreign language means a great expenditure of nervous energy. Not only does this exhaust the pupil and decrease his capacity for original and creative work, but it also defeats the purpose of education itself. Working in his own language, he can concentrate on the object of study, but if the medium is a foreign language, all his attention is taken up with the language itself. The result is an undue emphasis upon the literary aspect of education and this is exactly what has happened in India. For

the average student, higher education means a weakening of initiative and independence. As for primary education, it is hardly related to the needs of the people and is obviously meant to be merely an introduction to a higher stage. In a word, emphasis on English has robbed the Indian masses of the knowledge that is necessary for action and has deprived the intelligentsia of the energy born out of union with the masses.

English cannot therefore be the common language for India, and this in spite of the great advantages it seems to offer at first sight. We live in an increasingly inter-communicating world, and to establish and maintain a close contact with this world of interlacing credits, it is inevitable that India will, for at least some years to come, have to use one of the recognised world languages Even a nation's dictum will not create an international language in a day. If then English has to be retained as India's diplomatic language in commercial and political intercourse with the world outside, why not, it is argued, also retain it for communication within the land? And especially in view of the fact that any language in India is a foreign language to many and must be laboriously learnt?

The answer to this question is quite simple. Communication with the world outside is important but even more important is the problem of communication within India and for this, even the least known of India's languages is superior to English with all its richness and diffusion. Even

the least known of Indian languages is native to the land and known by large numbers of men who have imbibed it with their mothers' milk. English on the other hand is equally foreign to all and must be consciously and painfully acquired. Nor is this all, for similarities in structure, syntax and vocabulary help an Indian to learn an Indian speech other than his mother tongue, but in the acquisition of English, there is nothing to lighten his task. A common language for India must therefore be an Indian language.

Again with the insight of genius, Gandhiji saw that Hindustani is the only language capable of becoming the common language of India. Other languages have their own claims. Bengali has perhaps the richest literature of any Indian language. Tamil also has traditions of a glorious past. They are however languages of the circumference and in history we find that it is the language of the centre that has invariably triumphed. Bengali lost its chance with the transfer of the political capital of India to Delhi, for the language of the capital tends to radiate on all sides. The history of India also helped Hindustani, for was not Hindustani in its Urdu form the result of long historical processes? Geography, history and politics all pointed the way towards Hindustani.

The character of the language itself helped in the adoption of Hindustani as the common language. It is simple, it is easy to learn, and it is so nearly the highest common denominator of

the North Indian languages that with little or no instruction, most Indians north of the Vindhyas, can understand and talk *pidgin* Hindustani. The readiness with which we lapse into some sort of debased Hindustani, which is always a cross between our own mother tongue and some particular brand of Hindi or Urdu, and the ease with which it is understood by a man whose mother tongue as well as the brand of Urdu or Hindi is different from ours is another and a most convincing proof of this fact. It was for these reasons that Gandhiji induced the Congress to adopt Hindustani as its official language, and already it has begun a process of filtering down in the south. Nevertheless, there are difficulties in the adoption of Hindustani as the common language of India, and the recent agitation in Southern India is a case in point. We may, however, argue that people in the South will have to learn the language, for if they can learn English, why not Hindustani, which is at least more akin to their own languages?

The greatest obstacle to the adoption of Hindustani lies, however, within itself. Because, the first remark that one is tempted to make on hearing this proposal is,—"Hindustani of course, but which Hindustani?" For, there is Urdu, and there is Hindi,—each with all kinds of local variations. In Urdu, the man from Lucknow claims the possession of the sole and genuine article, a claim which the man of Delhi disdainfully rejects, while both combine to pour scorn upon the more provincialised form in Bihar. Hydera-

bad in the Deccan complacently watches the contest hoping that the last word would belong to it. Similarly, in Hindi the claim of purity advanced by Benares is challenged from other quarters, while *Bhojpuri* and *Deshwali* seem almost beyond the pale. Even if we overlook these minor differences within Hindi and Urdu, the distinction between them still remains. It is true that fundamentally the construction of Urdu and Hindi is the same; but in spite of this fundamental unity, the mutual distrust and jealousy of rival communities and provinces have forged between them a distinction, not merely of script and vocabulary, but bound up with their respective history and culture, and beset with lurking passions and dangerous feelings.

The fundamental difficulty, then, with regard to the adoption of Hindustani,—perhaps the only Indian language otherwise qualified to become an all-India language,—is the difficulty of choosing between Urdu and Hindi. Neither a Mussalman nor a Hindu would tolerate the language of his rival. Any attempt to give the decision in favour of any one of them would not only be rejected by the supporters of the other, but evoke strong communal jealousies and passions of the worst type. This explains the Congress refusal to face the problem of the script and the weak suggestion that both "Nagri" and "Urdu" should be kept. But this proposal obviously forgets that the perpetuation of the distinct scripts means the perpetuation of the rival languages with their different

vocabularies and consequently different association of history and culture.

Urdu and Hindi are basically the same language and differ only in their scripts and in the proportion of Sanskritic to Saracenic words. Many Congressmen saw that the only solution was to adopt a neutral script, the Roman, and facilitate communication between the two communities. Instead, Congress hesitated between the two scripts the Nagri to please the Hindu and the Urdu to satisfy the Moslem, and satisfied neither of them. The hesitation itself proved a matter of concern to the Mussalman and even orthodox Moslem Congressmen have complained that the proposal of giving equal status to the two scripts remained only a pious resolution. In effect, the Nagri is slowly but steadily crowding out the Urdu script. Nor can this always be prevented, for in areas where Moslems constitute a small minority, they are themselves gradually forced to adopt the Nagri script. All this has, however, led to increase of communal bitterness and growing estrangement between Hindi and Urdu. Hindi today tends to be even more Sanskritic than it was before, while Urdu retaliates by emphasising still more its Persian physiognomy. The history of Bengali is illuminating in this connection. There is a certain difference in the vocabulary used by the Moslems and the Hindus in Bengal, and since the Moslem are in a majority in the East while the Hindus dominate in the West, this has partially coloured the usage of the language in East and West Bengal. In

spite of all local differences, the existence of a common script has prevented their ossification into distinct languages. The difference in script has led to division in the case of Hindustani, while the unity of script has saved Bengali from a similar fate.

The problem of a common Indian language may therefore best be solved by the adoption of a common and neutral script. Often a flank attack succeeds where a direct attack fails and by removing the conflict from the sphere of language to the more abstract plane of script, we may hope to soothe passions and mitigate bitterness. The Roman may well provide a way out of the deadlock created by the struggle of the Nagri and the Urdu scripts, for this is the script, neither of the Hindus nor of the Mussalmans, and in adopting it neither community could feel any sense of triumph or defeat. Neither the Mussalmans nor the Hindus can claim it as their monopoly, and it would be a compromise which both could accept without any loss of self-respect or feeling of injured vanity and yet it would in a moment break down the barriers that separate Urdu from Hindi. We have already seen that fundamentally these are not two languages but the same language with the same structural organization, differing only in their respective proportions of Sanskritic or Saracenic words. The existence of distinct scripts tends to perpetuate these differences of vocabularies with the attendant differences of cultural association. If the two versions of the same language

were written in the same script, their fundamental unity would reveal itself. The apparent distinction which now exists would soon vanish through the constant interflow of words and ideas from the one to the other. This would not only make a common Hindustani language out of the rival groups of Urdu and Hindi, but it would also have the effect of enriching and widening the cultural life of the Musalmans and the Hindus. The Hindu elements brought in by Sanskritic terms and the Islamic factors entering through Saracenic words would in that case become the common heritage of all Indians, instead of the present state of affairs where the treasures of ancient Indian culture are concentrated among the Hindi-speaking Hindus, while those of the Saracenic civilization are practically the monopoly of the Urdu-speaking Mussalmans, much to the impoverishment of the cultural life of both.

Hindustani in Roman script would, therefore, serve to standardize the language, but this is not all. It would help materially in removing and solving the question of inter-provincial jealousies. Ignorance, and suspicion are at the root of these jealousies and one of the main causes of this ignorance and suspicion is the apparent variety of languages which makes intercourse between Indians so difficult. We have already pointed out that it is strange that this should be so, for in spite of local variations in sound, intonation and stress, their structural similarity is obvious even to superficial analysis. Their vocabularies are also largely

common, though this fact is not always obvious on account of differences in pronunciation. Every-day experience also bears this out, for with sufficient deliberateness in enunciation, a man from any part of Northern India can manage to make himself somehow understood by another from any other part. The adoption of Roman script by all the Indian languages would, therefore, make the process of intercourse far easier than it is to-day. This may also lead to an approximation in vocabularies of these languages, though the presence of independent literatures in many of them will prevent the loss of their respective identities.

The question of Southern India can be taken up at this stage. The Southern languages form a separate group and cannot easily be assimilated into Hindustani. But if the Roman script be adopted for them as well, there would immediately come into operation a tendency towards the emergence of one standard South Indian language evolved from the languages of today, and then a movement of rapprochement between this language and Hindustani. This tendency would be further strengthened if throughout India Hindustani were made a compulsory second language in all stages of education after the primary. The usual objections to a second language would not apply with the same force, for the economy of labour effected through the adoption of one common script for all the languages would largely counterbalance the strain of learning a new one—especially when that new language comes without the shock of a strange

appearance. A common script would also act as an inducement for a man of the South to study not only the languages current in the South, but also those of the North, and conversely, men belonging to the North Indian language group would no longer have the same initial hesitation or difficulty in learning the South Indian speeches. The greatest hindrance to acquiring a foreign language is psychological. It is the first shock of unfamiliarity which is difficult to overcome, and this sense of unfamiliarity and strangeness is very largely due to the unfamiliar script. The actual process of acquiring a working knowledge of a foreign speech is neither very laborious nor very difficult, as every one knows who has lived among the people born to the speech. The ease with which children pick up the language of their playfellows is further proof of this. It is also a fact that the script by itself is not very difficult to learn. An average adult person should learn even the most difficult script within a week or so. But the feeling of bewilderment at the novelty of the script frightens men away from the very attempt at the task. Even when the task has been undertaken as a painful duty, it acts as a brake upon the faculties of the mind and makes it all the more laborious. Things we do with joy, we do easily; and anything that would tend to diminish the psychological inhibitions would, therefore, mean real progress towards greater interprovincial intercourse and understanding.

If we agree to standardise Hindustani and

determine its script, one difficulty still remains. Are we to make this Romanised Hindustani the medium of instruction in different parts of India? Most people who readily and gladly welcome Hindustani as the common language of India would demur at this, for this would be too much like a repetition of the present state of affairs, only with Hindustani in the role which is now played by English. If we make the mother tongue the medium of instruction, as we must in the nature of things do, and keep Hindustani as a second language to be learnt by everybody, this would again involve an additional burden on the pupils. Nor would much Hindustani be learnt, for we know how a second language is treated by pupils all over the world. Adoption of the Roman script for all the Indian languages largely overcomes this difficulty, for as we have already seen, a difference of script not only means additional expenditure of energy but also tends to congeal the very attempt of learning a new speech. The standardization of the script all over India would not only save the pupils from the actual labour involved in learning the Urdu or the Hindi script in addition to that of the mother tongue. It would also have the effect of removing the psychological inhibition due to unfamiliarity with a strange script. The task of the pupils would be rendered easier by the tendency of the largely common vocabulary of today to become even more markedly so and the adoption of the mother tongue would not in consequence endanger the chances of developing an all

India speech.

The choice of the Roman as a common script would thus solve some of the outstanding Indian problems. It would create a standardized Hindustani and it would go a long way towards solving the vexed communal and provincial questions. For, these jealousies and hatreds are born of distrust and suspicion which are, at least in part, the effects of the present division of languages. A common script would not only tend to diminish mutual hatred and suspicion of the communities, making for greater mutual knowledge and understanding,—it would also act as a powerful solvent for the assimilation and synthesis of their respective cultures.

The objection may be raised that the Roman script would not prove suitable for conveying all the sounds current in Indian languages. It is true that the Roman script as used in English does not have symbols for all the Indian sounds, but this is after all a minor difficulty which can easily be overcome by borrowing symbols, where necessary, from the international phonetic script. Besides, that the difficulty is not insuperable has been proved by the experience of Pali, of Turkish and of Persian. All these languages are written in this script, which is the best possible proof that it can be done.

There are also technical and economical reasons for the adoption of the Roman script for Indian languages. Difficulties of printing and type-writing in Urdu or Nagri or any other Indian script are notorious. It is enough to say that to

this day, a satisfactory typewriter for any of the Indian languages has not been evolved. Both the Sanskritic and the Arabic types of script suffer from an unsatisfactory system of symbols for expressing vowel sounds. The arrangement which places the vowel signs sometimes before, sometimes after, sometimes below, and sometimes above the consonant signs is patently illogical. We may add that any system in which several signs representing two or more vowel and consonant sounds are combined to form a new and complex sign, stands self-condemned. This system demands a change, and it would be foolish to resist it on grounds of supposed national sentiment.

There have been people who have canvassed the possibility and yet argued that the adoption of the Roman script would lead to the denationalisation of the language, whatever that might mean. Appeals have also been made to our sentiments by reminding us of our indigenous scripts and pleading that they should not be given up in favour of a foreign one. But the answer to such objections is quite obvious. *A language is not its script*. The script is merely a set of visual symbols used to denote the sounds of the language. They are chosen arbitrarily and have no necessary connection with the sounds and still less with the meaning or significance conveyed by them. A child may imbibe the language with its mother's milk, but most certainly it does not imbibe the script in the same manner. The script has to be learnt painfully by the individual, whether he be a foreigner

or a native born to the speech. It may be conceded that one's language cannot be changed without doing violence to one's inmost nature, for a hundred nameless and intangible associations are bound up with one's mother tongue. It would, however, be foolish to apply the analogy in the case of the script. For, any other script would write the language equally well and the example of Germany, Turkey and China have definitely proved that script and language are entirely different entities. The example of Sanskrit is also a case in point, for the different scripts in which Sanskrit is written do not in any way affect its nature. One difficulty may arise with regard to the heritage of the literatures of the past. These are written in Nagri or Arabic script, and if Roman is adopted as the standard script, would be lost to the average lettered man. It may, however, be pointed out that this affects only the scholar and the historian of a language and its culture. For them, it would be imperative to learn the indigenous scripts and it could easily be arranged to transliterate into Roman script those among the classics which have become a common element in our national or social consciousness.

Nor is there much risk of the provincial languages losing their identity through the use of a common script. The European languages adopted it long ago, and yet there is never any suggestion of any of them losing its separate identity. French and Italian derive from the same stock, and resemble one another as closely as any two Indian

languages. A common script has not blurred the distinction between them but only made intercommunication easier. English and French have a large common vocabulary, and yet nobody suggests that a common script has reduced their capacity for independent development. If the Indian languages had no literatures of their own, there might have been some risk—though only a slight one—of their losing their identities, but their developed literatures and traditions render such a contingency impossible.

The advantages of the choice of the Roman script from the point of view of international communications are too obvious to require any special mention. We live in an increasingly intercommunicating world, and it is worse than useless to try to cut ourselves adrift from the general trend of world events.

It may be urged that this is only a minor consideration. No country or nation does or can choose its script with an eye to the advantages of the foreigner, and it is too much to expect that India will give up her own customary scripts in favour of the Roman, only out of a consideration of the difficulties which foreigners may have. While fully appreciating the weighty character of this objection, it may be pointed out that this factor is of greater importance today than it has ever been in the past, and with the gradual drawing together of the nations in a continually greater intimacy, it is becoming increasingly more important. The adoption of the Roman script would

put us into touch with the world and its interlacing interests; for, it is, perhaps, no exaggeration to say that the present age is the age of the Roman script. English and the other European languages adopted it long ago. Germany was a later convert, and today, Russia is on the brink of taking the decisive step. Turkey led the way in the Orient, and China and Japan bid fair to follow soon. The whole of the American Continent has adopted it. With our adoption of the same script, we would lay the first stone towards the emergence of Hindustani into one of the major languages of the world and also at the same time solve the problem of a national language for India.

BHAGWAN DAS

There does not seem to be any serious doubt left in any quarter, as to Hindustani being the National language of India. It is nearly equally certain that neither Hindi can be abolished, nor Urdu; any more than can Bengali, or Marathi, or Gujrati, or Tamil, or Telugu, etc. What is needed is to build up the Hindustani language, as an almost new language, which yet shall be composed almost wholly of Hindi and Urdu elements, with a few words of other languages as well, notably English. And this is far from difficult. The verbs are, practically all of them, common already to both Urdu and Hindi; if any new ones are taken up, from Sanskrit or Arabic, they should be *conjugated* in the same way as the old ones. The syntax is also the same, practically. The only difference is in the nouns, mainly. For technical, scientific, philosophical and literary writing it will be impossible to avoid the use of Sanskrit or Arabic nouns. The writer will inevitably employ those with which he is most familiar. The habit should be cultivated by the person who uses Sanskrit nouns, to find out, from a good dictionary, the Arabic or Persian equivalents, and put them in brackets, side by side with the Sanskrit; and *vice versa*, for him who uses Arabic-Persian nouns

normally. If nationalist writers would make it a rule to do so, within less than a year perhaps, a few hundred words of each language would become common property; and the fact would facilitate 'mutual understanding' in more than one very good sense, all over the land. Over 20 years ago, I happened to visit Pondicherry. Walking about in the evening by myself, I lost my way. The men I met and requested to show me the way to my lodgings, could not understand my English; nor I their French. Fortunately, I came across a person working on the Railway lines, who, being a Mussalman, knew a little Hindustani, and so was able to help me.

There remains the question of script. The present Arabic-Urdu script cannot indicate Sanskrit or English letter-sounds. The Sanskrit can: so can the English Roman script, with the addition of half-a-dozen diacritical marks. Either may be decided on, by a Committee of the Elect and Select. Remember; this does *not* mean that either the Devanagari (i.e. Sanskrit) script is to be wiped off from the face of India; or the Urdu (i.e. Arabic); any more than Hindi or Urdu or the other provincial languages. It only means that the *additional* National language, which would be taught in the educational institutions, all over the land, *side by side with* the provincial (or family) mother-tongue, would have this special script as *its* medium, running all over the land.

One good weekly, or monthly journal should be published, at some central place in India, con-

taining *educative* articles, promotive of 'good understanding,' in all senses of the words; systematically expounding different branches of knowledge (not merely collecting disjointed scraps of information); also, propounding *views*, setting forth each of the two proverbial sides of every question, pointing out the pros and cons impartially, coolly, calmly, rationally, without acrimony or vituperation or sarcasm etc.; stimulating reflection and consideration, not passion. This *one* journal should be published at the centre, in the single script decided on as above; and it should be reproudced at provincial centres, in that script as well as in the *script* of the provincial tongue, the *words* being those of Hindustani to which translation in the provincial tongue should *also* be added.

By and by, in the course of a few generations, should the National Hindustani (=Indian) language develop a powerful scientific, philosophical, artistic and technical literature of its own, then those provincial languages and literatures, which are too weak, will disappear of themselves, in the course of nature, without distress to any one.

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